THE HISTORY OF ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE, NORTH CAROLINA

Joyce Justus Parris

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TECHNICAL COMMUNITY
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NORTH CAROLINA

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Copyright: 1996
Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College
Asheville, North Carolina

Library of Congress Catalog Number:

96-84213

Published By:
Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College

Printed By:
Walsworth Publishing
306 North Kansas Avenue
Marceline, MO 64568

PREFACE

As our College moves into its thirty-seventh year, it is appropriate that we document the events that have established A-B Tech as an outstanding educational provider in the Western North Carolina region. The timing of this book was also fitting because many of our original faculty and staff are in the process of retiring or have retired. The intent was to capture not only the significant chronological events but also the character of those individuals who have devoted their professional lives to our College.

Joyce Parris, an outstanding and recently retired member of our English faculty, was commissioned to write our history. Not only has she captured the rich history of the land where our College is located, she captured, through hours of interviews, the dedication of our employees. As I read the first draft, I found myself laughing aloud one moment and wiping a tear away the next.

To hundreds of faculty and staff members who provided knowledge, guidance, and support to our thousands of students, thank you! And enjoy your reading.

K Ray Bailey
March, 1996

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The publication of THE HISTORY OF A-B TECH, BUNCOMBE COUNTY, N. C., would not have been possible without the support of President K. Ray Bailey.

Many helped by sharing their time and memories with me and by lending me scrapbooks, pictures, and annuals: Brewster Adams, former dean of night school; Mary Louise Carpenter, current director of counseling; Jean Clayton, current director of adult basic education; Herb Coman, present board of trustees' member; Mona Cornwell, desktop publishing specialist; Jo Ann Crompton, secretary to the President; Richard Croom, dean of the Madison Campus; Jack Davis, former vice-president of student services; J. B. Edwards, former director of personnel; Joe Franklin, current dean of business and hospitality; Tom Gaffigan, current dean of arts and sciences; Jessie Goforth, current accountant; Harvey Haynes, former President; Jo Ann Holderman, current instructor in practical nursing; Max Hutchins, current associate vice-president, continuing and off-campus education; Frances Johnson, former registrar; Shirley McLaughlin, current director of learning resources center; Frances McDowell, preserver of Smith McDowell House; Celia Miles, chairperson of English and foreign languages; Marie Pinner, former switchboard operator; Jim Rhea, chairperson of health and physical education; Dave Robinson, former board of trustees' member and personnel manager at Square D; Joyce Robinson, current instructor in practical nursing; Sherry Shields, instructor in dental hygiene; Bernard Smith, former chairperson of physics department; Jane Smith, former director of personnel; Lowell Smith, former dean of continuing education; Jean Stines, former instructor in dental hygiene; Bob Werth, former chairperson of culinary; Laura S. West, chairperson of medical laboratory technology; Dick White, former business division director; Dave Wolfe, current biology instructor; Olin Wood, vice president of instructional services.

Many other thanks are given to Anne Wright for research help in the North Carolina Research Library at Pack Library in Asheville, to the staff in the research room at Asheville Citizen-Times, and to the clerks in the register of deeds rooms at the Buncombe County Court House. Thanks also is given to Carroll Franklin, Director of Development at Carolina Day School in Asheville, for permission to use excerpts from its publication. Linda Friedman deserves a special thank you for her computer assistance and typesetting.

I also appreciate the words of encouragement from many I talked with as I sometimes pondered if this history of Asheville-Buncombe Tech ever would be completed. It probably isn't, so perhaps, someday, someone else would like to give his or her interpretation.

Joyce Justus Parris
February, 1996

DEDICATION

The History of Asheville-Buncombe Community College of North Carolina, is dedicated to the many students who have graduated from or have taken classes at Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute, Asheville-Buncombe Technical College, or Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College from 1959 to 1996.

The administrators, faculty members, members of the boards of trustees, and staff hope we have served you well during your college days with us. You have enriched our lives by attending.

We wish you the best and thank you for entrusting us with a part of your education.

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INTRODUCTION

What was originally, in 1959, an industrial education center with no classroom buildings until March of 1961, hoping to have a hundred students, became a community college on Victoria Road in Asheville, North Carolina, serving over twenty thousand students in 1995. However, no matter how the school progressed from an industrial center to a technical school, to a technical college, and to a community college, many people still think of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College as a "trade school." Perhaps since this was the original start, people, used to schools only having one specific purpose, cannot understand a school that is many-faceted. No matter how many name changes and differences in directions, the basic purpose is still the same: to serve students with the education they most need or want as adults and to take these students from whatever their educational levels to prepare them for wherever they want to lead to in their careers.

Over the years people attended this college on Victoria Road or one of its servicing areas with different purposes for attending. Some students learned to read for the first time in the adult basic educations program; some obtained a GED (high school equivalency) diploma; some learned skills to enrich their lives, such as basket weaving or a foreign language in continuing education; some learned how to open their own businesses; some learned to become skilled workers, such as welders or tool and die makers in the vocational division; some earned degrees, such as registered nurses or accountants in the technical division; some completed two years of college transfer credits to a four-year college in the college transfer program. Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College has meant a variety of things to the students who have attended from 1959 through 1996. The college changed to meet these students' needs.

Not many people wonder how a school developed. Most pick a school and are only concerned about if it offers what they want or if they want their children to attend. They do not think what it takes to develop a school from a piece of land to an operating and effective place of learning. A correct blend of administrators and boards of trustees, proper funding with community and government support, needed programs, land and buildings, faculty, and students make a school successful.

Hopefully, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College will be able to keep this successful blend which has made the school "work."

Perhaps, rather through chance, the Victoria Road campus site was a fortunate choice. This particular area south of Asheville, North Carolina, was steeped in history. Then, the timing seemed right for a few people with the support of the community to establish A-B Tech.

Chapter 1

HISTORY OF THE LOCATION OF ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

From 1961 to 1990, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College's property on Victoria Road in Asheville, North Carolina, grew from 19.37 acres to the current 144 acres. In 1959, four sites were considered for the location of an Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center: Biltmore School, which was rejected because of its containing only 12 acres of land; Asheville-Biltmore College's old site; the old State Test Farm site, which then adjoined Owen High School; the Victoria Road site. The site on Victoria Road with its original 21 acres was chosen by the Asheville City Board of Education and the Buncombe County Board of Education for its suitable size, its proximity to then Lee Edwards High School, and its already being owned by Asheville City Board of Education. [Asheville Citizen-Times, March 19, 1959; March 12, 1961.]

If this land on Victoria Road had been picked for its diverse historical significance, no location in Asheville could have been better chosen. Victoria Road and the surrounding acres have had a varied history. The people who have visited, have lived, or have been "schooled" in this vicinity have been from the poorest, hoping to find a better way of life, to the most wealthy, enjoying a luxurious life style. Perhaps these were all "dreamers" in their own ways.

Buncombe Turnpike

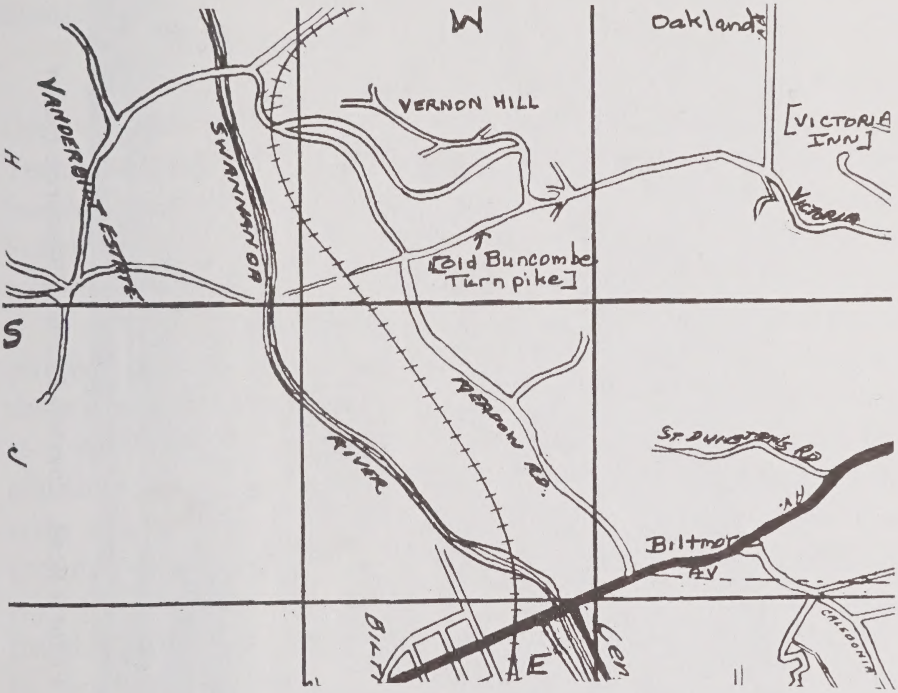
The now paved Victoria Road is over one of the oldest roads in Western North Carolina. When Buncombe County was formed in 1792 it contained most of current Western North Carolina. The county's first order of business was to levy taxes and to build roads. One of the earliest roads was from Asheville south down present Biltmore Avenue (then South Main) to Victoria Road "and by way of that road and an extension now closed across Swannanoa River to its southern bank where was the home of Col. John Patton. Over this ran the Buncombe Turnpike when subsequently established." [A History of Buncombe County, North Carolina, Volume 2. F. A. Sondley, 1930, p. 490]

The Turnpike was an unreal road for its day, leading beyond the confines of the mountains. The approximately seventy-five miles of Buncombe Turnpike was a "thoroughfare" completed in 1827 from Paint Rock near the Tennessee line to Saluda Gap near the South Carolina state line. From Warm Springs (now Hot Springs), the Turnpike followed the French Broad River before it turned into Asheville, then south onto present Victoria Road and across the Swannanoa River and up a ridge before veering eastward near the present Interstate 40, Biltmore exit and onto present Hendersonville Road through Arden, Hendersonville, and Flat Rock.

This turnpike was used for carriage travel and a daily stagecoach with mail service but mainly for driving stock. Horses, mules, cattle, turkeys, geese, ducks (sometimes four hundred in one bunch), and hogs were driven from the mountains and onto South Carolina to the markets, particularly into Charleston. Sondley estimated from his studies that over 150,000 hogs per year went down the Turnpike, and hogs could only travel eight to ten miles per day. [Sondley, pp. 619-621]

The people who took their stock over Victoria Road went with hopes of success -- gaining material profit and learning more about their world. Many students who now travel the same route come hoping for the betterment, never realizing the dreams of the ones that have gone the same route.

A 1912 City of Asheville map, which is located in the N. C. Research Room in Pack Library shows that the present Victoria Road from the Simpson Administration Building, going south, was then called the Vernon Hill Road, leading to the Vanderbilt Estate. The Buncombe Turnpike continued directly south to Meadow Road.


W
Oakland
VERNON HILL
[VICTORIA INN]
Victoria
[Old Buncombe Turnpike]
VANDERBILT ESTATE
SWANNANOA
RIVER
H
S
C
MEADOW RD.
ST. DUNSTAN'S RD
Biltmore
AV
CALEDONIA
E
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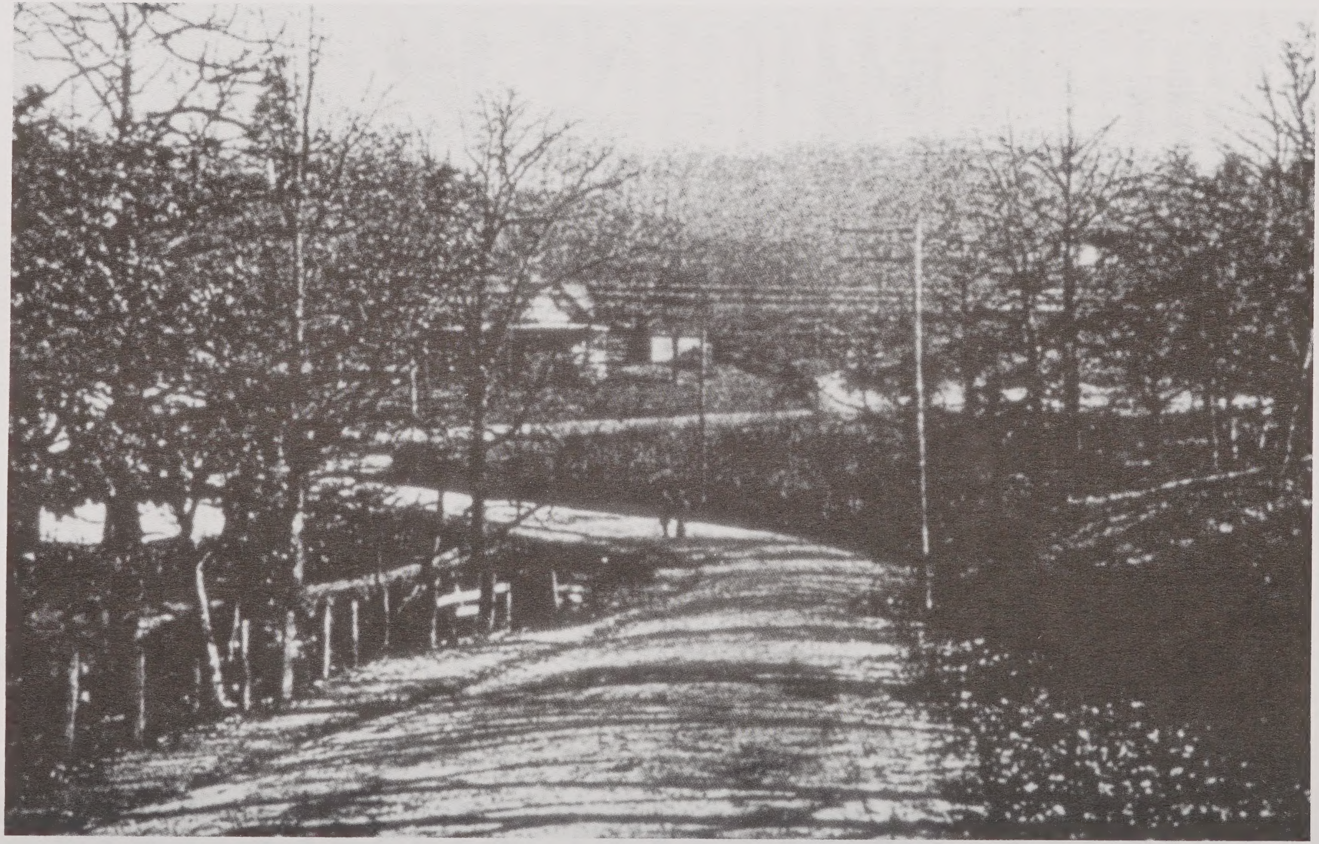


Early Victoria Road. Courtesy Learning Resources Center

Houses on Victoria Road

Where there were roads, people built houses. Some of the earliest on Victoria Road, which were probably very humble dwellings, have disappeared from memories and records, but some have been recorded and three still remain.

Smith McDowell House

The oldest residence existing on Victoria Road and in the City of Asheville is on the campus of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College: the Smith McDowell House. The Smith-McDowell House was built about 1840 by James McConnell Smith for his youngest son, John Patton Smith. This was a working plantation until after the Civil War.

"The home is of a modified Colonial style. It has two open porches, one upstairs above the front porch. On the north side there is a small covered doorway, apparently used in former years as a carriage entrance. The brick residence is surrounded by plantings and trees probably as old or older than itself. Massive oak trees and boxwood shrubs are naturally informally set on the grounds. The north side of the house is well-covered with English ivy." [quotes from a 1936 Asheville Citizen article, no specific date listed.] The home has ten large rooms, including four bedrooms. In each room is a fireplace. The fireplace in the basement is about five feet in length and five feet in width where the cooking for the household once took place.

James McConnell Smith was born June 14, 1787, son of Daniel Smith and Mary Davidson, and historically stated to have been "the first white child born west of the Blue Ridge as North Carolina now is." (Sondley, 748). His birth took place in a two-story log house between the old Asheville Railroad Depot and Carrier's Bridge. When the Smith House was first erected on the

Buncombe Turnpike, James Smith had the two-story log house in which he was born moved to the yard to be preserved. This small structure was later torn down. [1936 article] James M. Smith first received 123 acres from his father Daniel Smith on November 13, 1826 [Buncombe County Deeds, Book 14, page 343]. James McConnell Smith died May 18, 1856. He and his wife, Polly Patton, were buried on a knoll above the Smith-McDowell House.

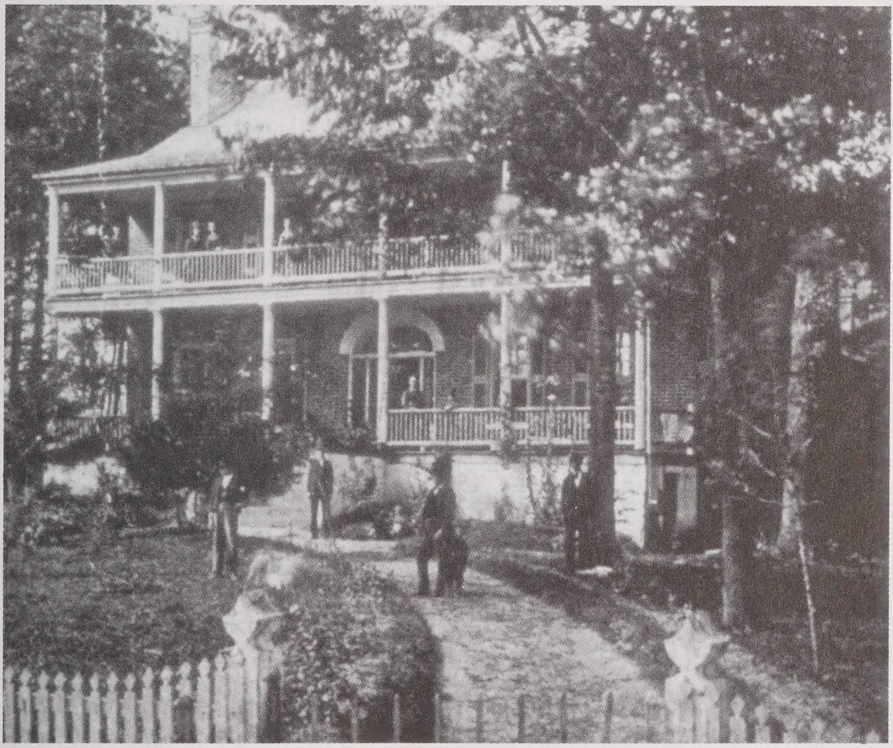
James M. Smith conveyed to son, John P. Smith, by will probated July 8, 1856, the "brick house at the confluence of the Swannanoa and French Broad Rivers." [Buncombe County Clerk of Superior Court Will Book A, page 171.]

The brick structure which John Patton Smith inherited had been created with careful planning. James Smith had brought plans for the house from England, where the bricks also were made. They were said to have been brought to this country as ballast on a ship and to have been hauled from Charleston, S. C., to Asheville in ox carts. [Asheville Citizen, May 29,1974, Mary Cowles.] John Smith lived in the home for only a short while, until his death in 1857. [1936 article]

James Smith's daughter Sarah Lucinda Smith and her husband, William Wallace McDowell "acquired it following her brother's death, and it became known as the McDowell house. [Asheville Citizen, May 29, 1974] Since John Patton Smith died without a will, the Clerk and Master in Equity conveyed to W. W. McDowell by deed dated August 13, 1860, a 315-acre tract. McDowell was the highest bidder at a public auction which included John Patton Smith's brick structure. [Buncombe County Deeds Book 44, page 11.]

The Civil War took its toll all over the South. People who were prosperous with big land holdings, crops, livestock, turned in the gold they had made and saved for the Confederacy currency and joined in the "Cause." William Wallace McDowell was no exception and organized in 1861 the "Buncombe Riflemen," the first company to leave Asheville for Confederate service.

After the Civil War, Colonel McDowell returned to his wife and nine children. He also returned to "freed" slaves who had no place to go. In order to keep some semblance of livelihood going, particularly obtaining food and clothing and restoring housing, he and his wife Sarah Lucinda Smith McDowell started selling pieces of their land from the acquired Smith property. (The Confederacy money that paid for the lost war effort was useless.)



1875 Picture of Home Built by James McConnell Smith.
Courtesy of Smith McDowell House.

One of the earliest parcels of land by 1870 was sold to L. M. Pease who later established the Home Industrial and Normal Schools. On November 13, 1871, William and Sarah McDowell sold 638 acres on the French Broad and the Swannanoa Rivers to Carrie Rumbough and all. [Buncombe County Deed Book 34, page 350] On December 4, 1872, William and Sarah L. McDowell sold 646 acres near the Swannanoa and French Broad Rivers to J. G. Martin. [Buncombe County Deed Book 35, page 164]

On November 26, 1875, William and Sarah McDowell granted 30 acres to John K. Connally where he built Fernihurst. [Buncombe County Deed Book 37, page 197] Since Mr. Connally chose as his house site the exact spot where the Smith Family cemetery was, the bodies had to be removed to the Newton Academy Cemetery, off present Biltmore Avenue. This event must have been very traumatic for Sarah Smith McDowell since she had to move her father and mother, the ones who had built the Smith-McDowell house.

Despite William McDowell and his wife's efforts, the debts and expenses were too big. Their home itself had to be sold. The dreams of James McConnell Smith were not realized here for his family. [Interview, Frances McDowell, Fall 1995.]

William W. McDowell and his wife Sarah Smith McDowell lived in this house for twenty-five years until they conveyed their ownership to Alexander Garrett, by a deed for 4 acres, plus 17 poles on April 9, 1881, which would have been the property where the brick house stood. [Buncombe County Deed Book 44, p.11] They also granted to Alexander Garrett on the same date a large tract of land in the same area. [Buncombe County Deeds, Book 41, p. 163]. Part of this land was conveyed to Robert U. Garrett and wife Adeline, in 1891 and in 1896.

This Smith-McDowell House next was owned by Charles Van Bergen and his wife Amelia, in 1898, Alfred and Caroline Bates in 1910, Henrietta Bates McKee in 1910.

While Frances McDowell was doing research about the Smith-McDowell House, she received a letter from Amarillo, Texas, from Mrs. F. T. O'Brien, who lived in the house when she was a small girl. Mrs. O'Brien included an excerpt from a memoir written by her mother, Mrs. McKee about when she owned the Smith-McDowell House from 1910 to 1913. "The excerpt describe the life of a fairly well-to-do family in Asheville in those days. It was mainly a life of gracious ease, of lavish entertainment and a large number of servants. Mrs. McKee and her family were good friends of the George W. Vanderbilts and were often guests at the Vanderbilts' Biltmore Estate. She describes one formal dinner at Biltmore in which four people -- Mrs. McKee, the two Vanderbilts, and another guest -- sat in regal, if somewhat solitary splendor, in the baronial dining hall at Biltmore before a roaring fire."

The letter also "reveals that sometime during the construction of Biltmore, the Smith-McDowell House was restored and enlarged by Richard Morris Hunt, the architect of Biltmore and the seven acres of ground around the Smith-McDowell House were landscaped by Frederick Law Olmstead, who landscaped Biltmore." [Bill Moore, "Preservation Project on Victoria Road," Asheville Citizen-Times, May 28, 1978.]

The owner after Mrs. McKee was C. Brewster Chapman in 1913, Herman A. Gudger by 1920, which was conveyed to the Wachovia Bank and Trust Company in 1949. The Wachovia Bank and Trust Company was the one that conveyed this house and land in 1951 to the Roman Catholic Diocese.

Michael J. Begley, Bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlotte, N. C., conveyed to the Board of Trustees of the Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute by deed dated May 27, 1974, a larger tract of land. This tract of land included the Smith-McDowell House and Fernihurst. [Buncombe County Deed Book 1100, p. 477.] (This tract of land to the Institute included 78 acres. Asheville Catholic High School had made five purchases of land by this date.)

"Back in 1842 when Asheville had only six hundred residents and there were only two hotels (one of which was the Buck Hotel which James McConnell Smith owned) and the nearest banking house to the city was at Charleston, S. C., the old Smith home was standing." Right through the years until about 1927 it was occupied by families. [1936 Asheville Citizen article].

The Board of Trustees of the Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute leased to the Western North Carolina Historical Association, Incorporated, approximately one acre of land for a period of two years 1974-76 for $1.00. Thomas Simpson, President of the school, signed the original lease. (This land actually consists of 1.6 acres.)

When Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute bought the Smith-McDowell House from Asheville Catholic High School in 1974, the old house was "empty and musty." [Asheville Citizen, May 29, 1974] Mary Cowles continued that this house which was "closely linked with the glorious and sometimes grim days of the past, may soon again be involved in the active life of the community." President Simpson and members of his staff had hope that the structure, with the help of the community, could be restored. Since 1976, this lease has been renewed for $1.00 for every ten-year period. Harvey Haynes, President of the school, signed these leases in an effort to preserve a part of the area's history.

The Western North Carolina Historical Society by early 1977 turned this restoration project over to the Smith-McDowell Heritage Center board. Work was done under the supervision of the North Carolina Archives. [Asheville Citizen, February 21, 1977] By May 28, 1978, $90,000 had been spent in preserving the exterior of the Smith-McDowell House. With the work of Mrs. Frances McDowell and Mrs. Joshua Camblos, the money had come in the form of grants from the state of North Carolina, plus contributions from Buncombe County, the city of Asheville, individuals, and a grant from a private foundation.

By 1980, $316,000 had been spent for restoration, and the Smith-McDowell House was opened as a local history museum. The house is listed on the National Register of Historical Places. The Smith-McDowell House, being beautifully restored, stands as a tribute of earlier aspirations over one hundred and fifty years ago.

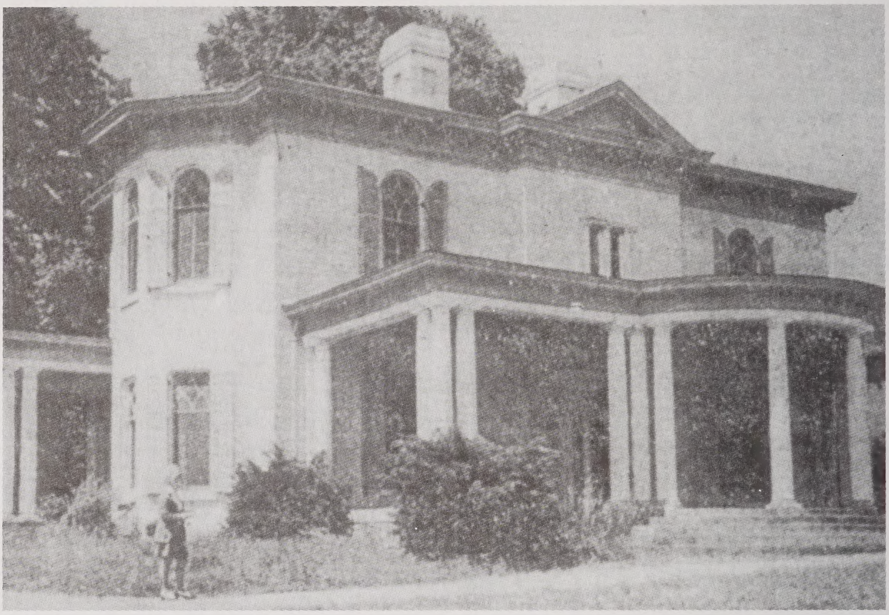
Fernihurst

When the McDowell's had to sell their holdings on Victoria Road, many people were interested in this area with its panoramic mountain views. One was Colonel John Kerr Connally and his wife Alice Coleman Thomas, who purchased 30 acres on November 26, 1875, [Buncombe County Deed Book 37, page 197]. This land was part of the early holdings of James McConnell Smith and sold by his daughter Sarah Lucinda Smith McDowell and her husband William Wallace McDowell.

After acquiring the land, John Connally chose his building site on the top of a knoll overlooking the French Broad River with a 360 degree view. This also had been the site of the Smith family cemetery. "The Smith family graves were moved to Newton Academy Cemetery when the land was sold. However, some graves evidently were not moved as bones were found in the basement and around the grounds of the house during excavations for additions." [Frances Arthur McDowell, "A History of Fernihurst," 1989.]

"Fernihurst, built of brick made from clay taken from the 350 acres which once surrounded it, has walls 15 inches thick and its spacious porch with Doric pillars and red tile floor commands views to the east, south, and west.

"The stair hall is dominated by a stairway built of caged newels, turned balusters and molded walnut rail. The library still



Fernihurst in 1974.

boasts its original walnut paneled walls and its floors are of alternating strips of pine and black walnut. To the right of the huge drawing room is the dining room paneled with curly poplar, now rare.

"Only the original structure now stands, but at one time as the result of many additions through the years to accommodate increasing numbers of guests, Fernihurst had been expanded to fifty or more rooms, approximately thirty of which were bedrooms. [Mary Cowles, "A-B Tech Hopes to Restore Two of City's Oldest

Homes," Asheville-Citizen, May 29, 1974.]

Frances McDowell in her booklet about Fernihurst stated that one can imagine what life must have been like at Fernihurst with this large family and their many connections with wealthy and prominent people in both the United States and Europe. "Mrs. Connally loved to entertain and it was not uncommon for them to have as many as five hundred people, including the Vanderbilts, at one of their parties. Their parties frequently lasted several days with as many as a hundred people staying overnight. Colonel Connally, who served in the 55th North Carolina Regiment during the Civil War, did not approve of drinking, and it is reported that he would stay in the little house out back when the parties were going on. The Connallys had numerous servants, many of whom were from foreign counties. Mrs. Connally and each of the girls had their own personal maids to dress them in addition to the upstairs and downstairs maids to take care of the house. They also had French chefs and cooks to prepare the foreign dishes for the family and their many guests.

"Colonel Connally died January 31, 1904, at Fernihurst. Mrs. Connally remained at Fernihurst until her death in 1917, and they are both buried at Riverside in Asheville." [Frances McDowell] Mrs. Connally's mother also died at Fernihurst after a fall down the cellar doorway. The Connally's oldest daughter, Mary, lived at Fernihurst until 1929. She married Otis Mills Coxe who built the old Battery Park Hotel and for whom Coxe Avenue is named. She once sued the Southern Railway System when she tried to get the round house removed from her sight. "She asked $250,000 in damage and a U. S. District Court jury awarded her one cent [Cowles, Asheville Citizen, May 29, 1974]."

Fernihurst was vacant from 1929 until 1933 when John P. Curran and his wife bought it. At the time of this sale, Fernihurst on Victoria Road was described as "one of the most beautiful estates in western North Carolina" [Asheville Citizen, January 25, 1933]. The Currans planned to remodel the house and to reclaim the 47 acres and to spend $10,000. The house then consisted of 35 rooms, but had only had 12 rooms when originally built. The brick original house had been added on to with frame additions at various times. "Mr. and Mrs. Curran decided to raze the additions. Mr. and Mrs. Curran visited Asheville about a year ago and were much pleased with the scenery and climate here." [Asheville Citizen, January 25, 1933] The Currans changed the name from Fernihurst to "Viewmont."

The Currans lived in Asheville about five years and invested in many properties in the area. "Due to overspeculation, in the area they went bankrupt, and their property was sold." [Frances McDowell] The sale of "Viewmont" was reported in the Asheville Times on September 4, 1940, stating "The palatial, 12-room house on Victoria Road, surrounded by about 50 acres of land, is one of Asheville's most historical and beautiful homes."

" Mr. Peter G. Thomson, Jr., of Cincinnati bought the estate as a retirement home. Mr. Thomson was the eldest son of Peter G. Thomson, founder of Champion Paper and Fiber Company. He was also a brother of Mrs. Reuben B. Robertson. When he retired from Champion he became an investor and was an extremely wealthy man. He spent his summers in Asheville at Fernihurst, living a very quiet life. He owned the property almost twenty years and died of a heart attack in the bathtub at the house on March 23, 1960." [Frances McDowell]

The Fernihurst property was sold to the Catholic Diocese of North Carolina for the purpose of holding seminars in the house. In 1974, the Catholic Diocese of North Carolina sold Fernihurst, along with seventy-eight, acres to Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute. Fernihurst is now Magnolia Building and is used for the Human Resources Development programs.

The site, picked by Connally and sold by the McDowells, may have been worth the "bones" underground since this was supposedly the land that George W. Vanderbilt wanted before he built his Biltmore House. If that had come true, the 1875 Fernihurst would have never been part of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College's campus.

Public Structures

On the campus that is now Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College were a hotel, some homes that started as private residences and became commercial, some homes that started as rental properties and became private residences, a Presbyterian Church and a manse. Besides the Connallys and the Garretts living in Victoria in 1890, residents included Mrs. Charles McNamee, Rev. R. G. and Mary Pearson, Rev. L. M. Pease, Charlotte and Charles Rosenbury, Ellen McDowell, D. H. Miller (a watchman), Adeline Orr (a nurse), Mrs. William Orr, Charlotte, Eliza E. and J. L. Perry, and Jno. Perry (a nursery man at Vanderbilt's place), Norah, M. L., and E. A. Hullet, Ernest Kuanstim [This was later listed as Kirstein.] (gardener). [Asheville City Directory, Fulenweilder, 1890, N. C. Research Room, Pack].

Oakland Heights Hotel/Victoria Inn

At least two important events occurred in connection with Alexander Garret after he bought the Smith-McDowell House. On March 7, 1887, he and other Victoria Road residents organized the town of Victoria, N. C. Garrett was its first mayor. This was a township of homes basically, not businesses, but Alexander Garrett built the Oakland Heights Hotel in 1889.

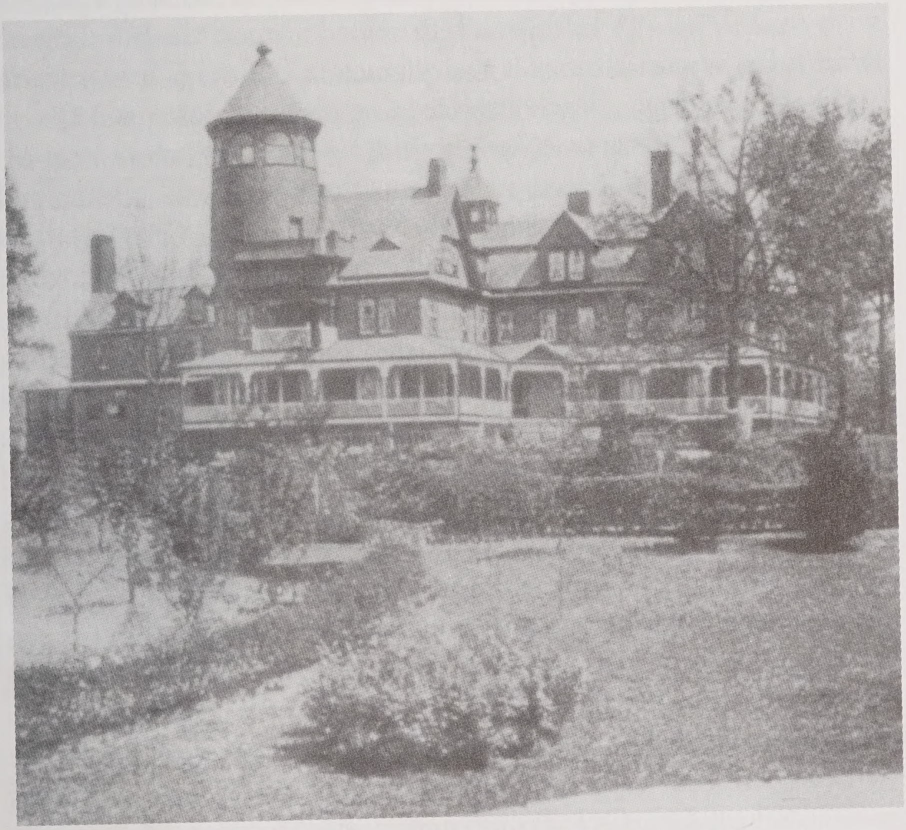
This hotel, which was deeded to his son Robert U. Garrett, had "a varied career, passing successively from a group of Methodist ascetics to a Presbyterian Missions, then to a rapid succession of inn proprietors who made it the center of parties at the turn of the century. Then under the name of Oakland Heights Hotel and the Baths, the eighty room structure became a sanatorium directed in 1896 by Dr. Paul Paquin and Dr. Westray Battle. A year or so later, it was operated as a Presbyterian boarding school for young women until 1909 when once more it was restored as a resort hotel, named Victoria Inn. In 1910 a costly fire in the north wing discouraged the owner, Mr. John H. Carter, who was glad to sell it for $37,000 to the Sisters of Christian Education." [North Carolina Catholic, Isabella Fitzgerald, November 19, 1961. A copy of this article is the N. C. Room, Pack Library, Asheville, N. C.]

From various sources, more names were connected to this Oakland Heights Hotel. On July 27, 1896, the Oakland Heights Sanatorium Company under the ownership of Charles M. Stedman had failed to pay the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church on Victoria, 15 acres; therefore, on December 30, 1897, the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church sold this to the Asheville Sanatorium. [Buncombe County Deed books 103, p. 435; 104, p. 68.] According to the Asheville City Directory, 1896-1897, Oakland Heights' proprietor was C. A. Wood. In an 1899 advertisement by J. M. Campbell, Asheville realtor, "Land of the Sky," this was Oakland Heights Sanatorium. [N. C. Room, Pack Library]

"John Carter willingly sold it and its 14 acres for $46,000 with the Reverend Mother Suzanne Deplanck signing the deed for Victoria Inn on December 13, 1909." [Asheville Citizen, September ll, 1961]

This structure was known as "Victoria" by the St. Genevieve's sisters. "The front part of Victoria Inn had a circular driveway with a magnificent view of the Biltmore Estate and of Biltmore House" plus Pisgah and the Rat. From the back part of the building on a clear day, Tennessee and the Smokies could be seen. Victoria Inn was on the highest ground between Asheville and Biltmore. [St. Genevieve's Remembered, 1908-1968, Mother Margaret Potts, RCE, 1991, Carolina Day School, p. ll]

Victoria Inn contained a large lobby with several large parlors on each side before a hall led to a large and a small dining room. Off the dining rooms was a large ballroom, under which was a gymnasium. Eighty bedrooms were above the main floor.



Victoria Inn, Courtesy Carolina Day School.

From the front view at the left corner of the second and third floors was a tower which had once been a water storage with a tank containing 30,000 gallons. The height of the hill would cause a lack of water pressure for the structure otherwise. [Potts, p. 12] "At the very top of the tower, is a circular room enclosed by 16 windows, giving the viewer a wide panorama of Asheville and the surrounding countryside." ["Victoria Inn," Voice of the Pines, Maydean Batchelder, May 1951] "The tower could be seen from all over Asheville. It was a regular landmark, very high and very imposing." On the opposite side of the water tower was a section with four floors. A large porch extended around the building on three sides. Victoria Inn was a very gracious building. it was warm and hospitable . . .. It was a welcoming place." [Potts, p. 12]

For 52 years, Victoria Inn, once the whole of St. Genevieve's School, later served as an administration building and grammar school for St. Genevieve's of the Pines. In the fall of 1961, the grammar students moved into their new building while the sisters continued to live in the old structure. [Asheville Citizen, September ll, 1961] By January of 1963, Mother Potts, RCE, Mother Superior, said, "All that remains of Victoria Building is a few standing sections of wall . . but progress is replacing Victoria with Madonna Hall." [Asheville Citizen, January 6, 1963]

Victoria Inn sat on the site of the present parking lot next to Ivy Building and the Pines Building. Madonna Hall still stands on the A-B Tech campus and is occupied by the Sisters who were instructors at St. Genevieve's/Gibbons Hall.

Kent/Baker/Bell Eden Hall

Where Oak Gymnasium and Student Center are currently located on A-B Tech's campus, there was an estate at 285 Victoria

Road known by various names: Fred Kent House, Baker House, Bell Eden Hall, Stage Coach Manor.

On July 17, 1899, Robert U. Garrett sold this property of 9.6 acres to Caroline and F. W. W. Graham [Buncombe County Deeds 100, p. 265]. This property was sold for $9,600; so in 1899, it seems some type of house, if not the estate discussed, must have already been built by Robert U. Garrett, next door to his parents at the Smith-McDowell House.

F. W. W. Graham was mayor of Victoria in 1902

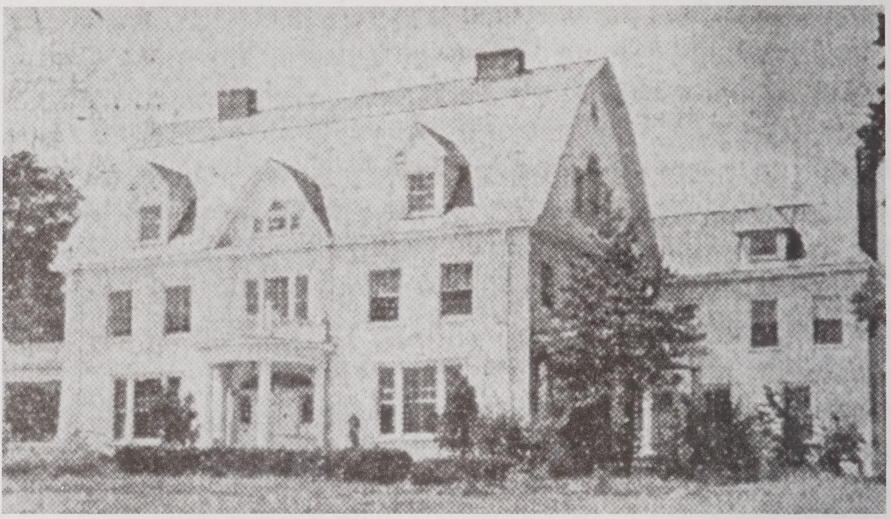
The Grahams sold this property to Henry Berger on April 23, 1915. [Buncombe County Deeds, 199, p. 221]. The Grahams on this deed were stated as from Philadelphia. This property was briefly owned by Lillian and Robert Neely before being sold to Louise Kent on July 4, 1921. In the 1925 Asheville City Directory the home was listed as Fred Kent. The Kents sold the house to the Bakers on September 12, 1930. All of these owners used the estate as a private residence.

"The 19-room three-story colonial mansion stands in a setting of English boxwoods and surrounded by terraced lawns and gardens." [AC April 4, 1949] In an undated advertisement, the mansion was described as "located on an exclusive residential ridge . . .. Surrounded by landscaped grounds covering ten acres . . .. Shaded lawns with winding paths and bird sanctuaries, terraced gardens of old Southern charm."

A 1948 sales advertisement stated that the residence was built by a "Philadelphia financier, who, we are told, employed the same architect and landscape architect as those used for the famous Biltmore House." The house had twenty-five rooms, "spacious drawing room, lounge, foyer, ballroom, and semi-solarium." An additional building, 45 feet by 90 feet, "two and one-half stories, of stucco and brick" was on the property. The price was $55,000.

J. W. Bell turned this estate into Bell Eden Hall, an exclusive rest home with "tray service for breakfast" for mature guests who "discriminate." This establishment continued until 1946 when it became the Stage Coach Manor, "an exclusive guest home," which only operated during 1947. The estate at 285 Victoria road was vacant in 1948. [Asheville City directories, N. C. Room, Pack]

On April 2, 1949, Dorothy E. Bell sold this estate with its ten acres to Vincent S. Waters, Bishop, for St. Francis High School.



Fred Kent House, Baker House, Bell Eden Hall, Stage Coach Manor.

This house and its property was later the start for Asheville Catholic High School which built the gymnasium and a classroom building on this property. By 1970, the "Baker home with its superb formal gardens once occupied the spot where the gym now stands." [Asheville Citizen, March 29, 1970]

Vernon Hill

George W. Vanderbilt's influence spread into the township of Victoria. He was just down the ridge south over the Swannanoa River and had friends who wanted to come to this area and be close to his estate for visiting. He decided these people needed cottages to rent. Of course, these would not be ordinary cottages.

Plus, Charles McNamee, who lived in Victoria, had purchased much land for the Biltmore Estate and became mayor of Victoria in 1896. He was also Vanderbilt's cousin. McNamee was for many years "a leading member of the legal profession in Asheville" and a proponent for developing a Southern Appalachian Mountains park as early as 1899. [Asheville Citizen-Times, October 19, 1930]

Charles McNamee on November 11, 1889, bought twenty-five acres of land from V. S. Lusk and wife on Victoria Road for $27,500. [Buncombe County Deed Book 68, p. 86]. This land was "on the south and west by the Swannanoa river on north by the land of John K. Connally and on the east by the public road leading to the ford of said river at the P. F. Patton old house known as the Swannanoa Dairy Farm." McNamee on June 9, 1905, who was then listed as from King County, Washington, sold this 25 acres to George Vanderbilt. [Buncombe County Deeds, 138, p. 414]. This was on the old Garrett and Lusk line "opposite the entrance to the late Col. J. K. Connally's residence." This seems to be the land that the "Vernon Hill" properties were on. Either McNamee had these built on his land, or the houses were not built until 1905.

Richard Morris Hunt designed the Biltmore House, the French Renaissance Chateaux, completed in 1895. Hunt's associate was Richard Sharp Smith who continued Hunt's architectural style after Hunt's death in 1895. "Smith designed several large houses for Vanderbilt which were constructed sometime prior to 1900 just north of the Swannanoa [River] on the former James Smith property incorporated in 1887 as Victoria. Vanderbilt held the `villas' or `model cottages,' as they were advertised, as rental property for several years before selling them as private residences." [Cabins and Castles, edited by Douglas Swaim, 1981, pp. 81-82] From Buncombe County deed studies, the Vanderbilts started selling these houses in 1911.

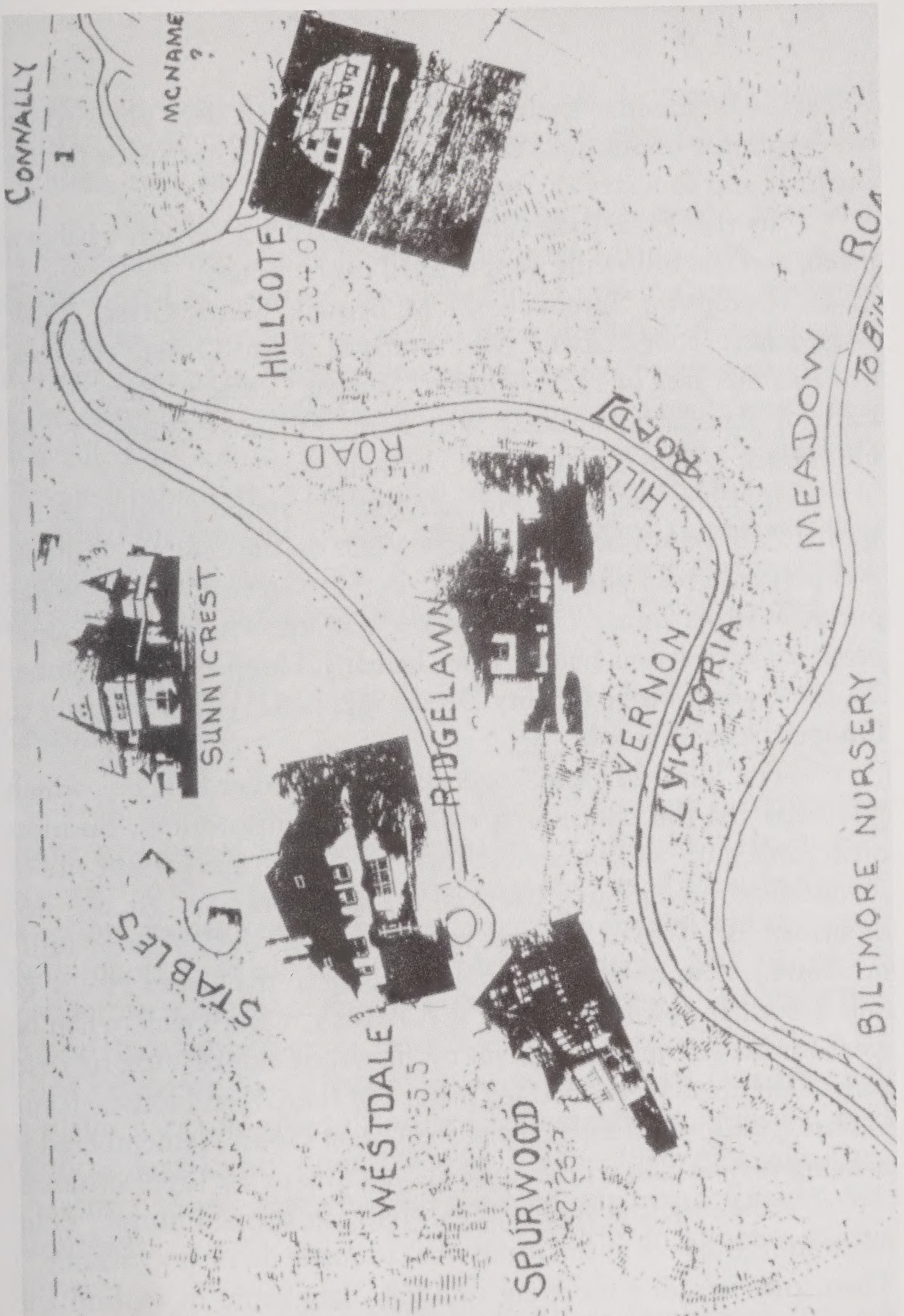
These houses that made up Vanderbilt's Vernon Hill were named Spurwood, Westdale, Ridgelawn, Hillcote, and Sunnicrest.

Spurwood was at the western extremity of Vernon Hill. The exteriors of the houses varied somewhat, but the interiors basically contained a library, parlor, reception hall, dining room, kitchen, and butler pantry on the first floor with the second floor containing four or five bedrooms and one or two baths. Attics were finished with two to four "chambers" and a bath. Cellars contained the laundry and heater

Westdale was higher up the ridge just to the east, with Sunnicrest closer to the top of the ridge adjoining Connally's property. Below Sunnicrest was Ridgelawn. Hillcote was the smallest of the five houses, with its kitchen in the basement and situated eastward from the others at the head of a "cove" on a lower slope of the ridge.
["Vernon Hill," Biltmore Estate, Victoria, N. C., advertisement. N. C. Research Room, Pack.]

"Only one of the group, `Sunnicrest,' survives. It is a charming Tudoresque structure, featuring brick quoining on a pebbledash ground floor and real and applied half-timbering above. Like nearby Fernihurst, the house enjoys a spectacular southern panorama. Around the turn of the century it rented for $350 monthly, completely furnished except silver, linen, and blankets." [Cabins and Castles, p. 82]

Sunnicrest was purchased by C. W. Radeker and wife on May 10, 1911, from George Vanderbilt, including six acres [BCD 172, p. 301] and remained in this family until the Buncombe County Commissioners purchased the property for A-B Tech in 1990.


CONNALLY
1
MCNAME
?
HILLCOTE
ROAD
HILL ROAD
MEADOW
ROA
TO BIL
SUNNICREST
RIDGELAWN
VERNON
VICTORIA
BILTMORE NURSERY
STABLES
WESTDALE
SPURWOOD
SOUTHERN RR

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College plans to use the house for continuing education and conference space for the Business and Industry division. [Interview, fall 1995]

In the 1925 Asheville City Directory, Vernon Hill was listed, and the following people lived in the houses: "Spurwood," H. C. Thompson; "Westdale," H. M. Brown; "Sunny Crest," C. W. R. Radeker; "Ridge Lawn," Mrs. Annie H. Post. Other "cottages" listed in this area in 1925 included "Wright Cottage," Rev. G. H. Enfield; "Knollacre Cottage," Wm. Farr; "Hilcote Cottage," H. M. Heywood; "Allen Cottage," J. G. Stikeleather.

In 1994, the name Hillcote did not sound familiar to the staff at A-B Tech since in the early 1960s on the campus, Hillcote was painted green and known just as the "Green House." When purchased this house on 3.22 acres was known as the Hooper property since it was bought from Lamar J. Hooper on November 20, 1964. [Buncombe County Deeds, 912, p. 321] This was sold to Hooper from Shufords.

The "Green House," over sixty years earlier Hillcote, which was used for the continuing education administrators, business office, and staff, was situated slightly west from the present site of Rhododendron Building overlooking a deep ravine. (It was not described as a "cove" by staff members as in the "Vernon Hill" brochure.) Laura West remembered going to the Green House to talk about her possible position at A-B Tech. Max Welch, when he went for his job interview, went to the wrong side of Victoria road and ended up at Faith Cottage instead of the Green House. Jessie Goforth, who was a secretary at the Green House, remembered it as being very cold in winter and building fires in the fireplace there.

However, the staff was surviving in the old house. (The motto of the school at that time was "to make do or do without.") Then, one winter's morning in 1968, they came in to find the interior smokey and the whole place black with soot. Ray Bailey, who is now President of A-B Tech, remembered calling Tom

Simpson to announce, "Furnace blew up." Mr. Simpson instructed them to move into two of the newly finished motel rooms in "D" Building, now Birch Building.

Jane Smith, administrative assistant to President Simpson, remembered laughing, to herself only, when Mr. Cowan, member of the Board of Trustees, was determined that the school should own the deep gully near where the Green House sat. She said when it was purchased in 1965, known as the Johnson property with 1.46 acres, staff members called it "Cowan's Abyss." This "abyss slowly was filled with torn down structures; some say old St. Joseph's Hospital; others say old Memorial Mission Hospital. One suggested the old Hillcote and Faith Cottage are buried there too. One thought it was a city dump. Regardless, the gravel on the current parking lot is above much history. "Cowan's Abyss" is filled.

Other Structures

A house, later sold by the Vanderbilts, was probably the home of Charles McNamee, who sold it and the Vernon Hill property to the Vanderbilts when he moved to Washington state. It sat on the campus where the current Simpson Administration Building is located. On November 20, 1920, Mrs. Edith S. Vanderbilt sold this property with 2.35 acres to E. W. and Ellen Patton [Buncombe County deed 264-32]. This was sold to Farrs by Ellen Patton on May 17, 1923 [Buncombe County deed 276-120]. William Farr sold this to Robert G. Monteath, Jr., July 30, 1945 [Buncombe County deed 585-450]. By the 1948 Asheville City Directory, Knoll Acres had been turned into apartments by Mr. Monteath. By 1950, there were four or five apartments in this house.

Mr. Monteath conveyed this to Eliada Orphanage, Inc., on February 22, 1957, [Buncombe County deed 783-577].

The Eliada Orphanage had bought this house to be used as a home for unwed mothers and called it Faith Cottage. Eliada moved this service from its former location on Atkinson Street in Asheville in 1958. Faith Cottage operated on this site until in May of 1969, when the service moved to another site in Asheville to "make room for expansion to the College's [A-B Tech's] campus." [Asheville Citizen, May 13, 1969]. Ray Bailey remembered this structure as being in very "run-down" condition at the time A-B Tech purchased it. This large structure was used as a fire-training exercise, but the billows of smoke that lasted for a day and a half caused Asheville residents to loudly protest.

In the Asheville City Directory, 1904-1905, several boarding houses were listed as in Victoria: Morrmont Cottage, Elbemar, Ridgewood.

The former C. G. Memminger house plus its 14 acres was added to St. Genevieve-of-the-Pines property in 1948. At that time it became the school for secretaries and Gibbons Hall School for boys [Asheville Citizen, April 12, 1951].

Lucien Memminger lived at the corner of Oakland Drive and Victoria from 1933 through the 1940s. [Asheville City Directory, 1945] There was also a house between the Memminger house before going south to the Smith-McDowell House.

"The little town of Victoria, North Carolina, existed until only March 4, 1905, when Asheville added the territory to its city limits and repealed Victoria's charter." [Sondley, p. 659.]

By 1900, there was an Oakland Heights Presbyterian Church in Victoria near the Oakland Heights Hotel. In 1907, the pastor, the Reverend Robert I. Gamon, doctor of divinity, resigned. [Department of History, Presbyterian, Montreat, N. C.] In 1908, the Reverend Mr. Gray was resident pastor of the Home Industrial and Asheville Normal Schools and of Oakland Heights Presbyterian Church. There was also a manse located on Victoria Road.

The Former C. G. Memminger Home, 1948

On Victoria Road, some of the wealthy lost their money during the depression of the 1930s. Some moved on, leaving the properties for schools to be built and for students to come -- perhaps to instill more lasting riches.

Early Schools near and on the Campus of AB Tech

Again, although there was no connection with the choice of locations for Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Victoria had been the site for four schools whose purpose was to help Western North Carolina young people have a better life.

Home Industrial School

The Home Industrial School was boarding school and day school for female students 5 - 20 years of age, originally in 1887 covering grades from 1-6. The success of the Home Industrial School caused the Presbyterian Home Mission Board to establish the Asheville Normal School to train teachers in 1892. These schools were at the intersection of then South Main Street (now Biltmore Avenue) and Victoria Road.

When retired Reverend Louis M. Pease and his wife moved south of Asheville on the present Memorial Mission Hospital property, they bought a house, a barn, and a little over thirty acres. They first bought three parcels of property from Sarah L. McDowell, et al: June ll, 1870, eight acres [Buncombe County deeds 33-284]; February 7, 1876, sixteen acres [38-7]; August 7, 1876, no acreage listed; November 16, 1885, eight acres adjoining Alexander Garrett [49-382]. They decided to open a boarding house. When employing women to work for them, they found that few could read and write. Mr. Pease wanted to establish a school but was not financially able. He told Dr. Thomas Lawrence, a boarding guest about his idea for a school. Three years later Dr. Lawrence was working for the Women's Board of Home Missions to select a site in the South for a girls' industrial school. He contacted Dr. Pease. [Asheville Citizen-Times, January 26, 1969]

Mr. and Mrs. Pease deeded their property to the Presbyterian Missions on June 17, 1887, and the first school session opened in the Pease home on October 5, 1887. "Within a few weeks the house was filled to its capacity with 70 boarding students and 20 day students."
[Asheville Citizen-Times, January 26, 1969] By October 1888, however, there were 115 students. [Asheville Times, July 12, 1972]

"The Home and Industrial School was a pioneering institution from the first." It stressed home training and religious instruction in connection with the regular grammar and grade work. [Asheville Citizen-Times, June 28, 1936] Originally the first six grades were offered, but as the school progressed, high school grades were added. From a 1908 newspaper article, "The Cornerstone of Pease House," a cornerstone of the "new and commodious building" for the Pease Memorial House was laid. This house was designed as a home for girls under twelve as their primary school. Mrs. Pease who was 86 years old attended the ceremony. Mr. Pease had served as Superintendent for 15 years before retiring in 1907.

The courses taught at the Home Industrial School by 1900-1901 were grammar, music, sewing, "cookery teaching," domestic science and drawing. [Maloney's Asheville City Directory, 1900-1901]

When public schools were better developed for the rural areas, the lower grades were dropped at the Home Industrial School in 1925, and then the high school was discontinued by 1931.

Asheville Normal School and Collegiate Institute

The Asheville Normal School and Collegiate Institute was created on this same property and had the basic purpose to prepare young women who never had dreams to go out to teach others to have dreams. The Home Industrial School and the Normal School both stressed improvement in life styles. The Normal school grew from a two-year institute to a four-year college.

The Normal and Collegiate Institute was established in 1892 by the woman's executive committee of the Presbyterian Church, USA. The object was to provide higher education for young women from the Southern Appalachians and to train teachers, particularly for rural schools. The Home Industrial School was used for the aspiring teachers' practice teaching.

One of the purposes of the Institution while training teachers was "to put skill and intelligence into the doing of manual things." The Institution owned a modern laundry in which laundering was taught as a science. [Asheville Citizen-Times, June 28, 1936] In 1900-1901, courses included history, psychology, English literature, Latin, physical culture, mathematics, English, music, drawing, stenography, typewriting, bookkeeping, sewing, dressmaking, milliner, cooking. In 1916, cabinet making was introduced to add to the industrial activities.

By 1921 on Victoria Road, the Asheville Normal and Associated Schools included the Asheville Normal, Home School, and the Pease home on the 35 acres. [Asheville Citizen, November 30, 1921] Off campus on Biltmore Avenue was a training school at the former Newton Academy, one of the earliest schools in Asheville, established before the Civil War.

The Asheville Normal Institution became a college in 1926, offering four years of college instruction. Its library contained more than 20,000 volumes. The college stressed "doing or putting into practice what is learned," such as studying home economics and budgeting and practicing living on a budget. Henry Ford was once a guest at a "six-cent luncheon" in one of the demonstration cottages. [Asheville Citizen-Times, 28 June 1936]

During the nine-months' academic year, only females from the Southern Appalachian were accepted. In 1936, the total cost for a year of college instruction, room, board, textbook use, and all incidental fees was $140. A student who could pay more was encouraged to go elsewhere for an education so that a student of limited funds could attend. In 1936, there were 400 students. [Asheville Citizen-Times, June 28, 1936]

A summer school was started in 1918 on the campus. The summer school was open for students from any part of the country. The Rotary Club of Asheville donated $500 the first year to get this summer program going. The professors selected for the summer school were from various colleges, including Harvard, Yale, Duke, Columbia. The number of students averaged eight hundred per summer through 1936.

In 1936, the name of the institution was changed to Asheville Normal and Teachers College which could confer a Bachelor of Science degree in Education. At this time, the school owned 15 buildings on its 32 acres of land.

In 1940, the Presbyterian Board of Missions withdrew its support from the Asheville Normal College. By 1944, the local community could not find a way to continue to finance the school, although it had tried. The school closed at the end of the term in 1944. [Asheville Citizen-Times, July 26, 1969]

Asheville Normal Pease Hall
June 28, 1936, AshevilleCitizen-Times

In 1996, the 100-foot chimney below Memorial Mission Hospital next to one on its parking garages is all that is left from the buildings at the Normal School. The old school's heating plant was still serving the hospital in 1970. Gone was the huge dormitory which was torn down in 1950 after being damaged by fire while it was occupied by the Army as a part of the Ground and Service Forces Redistribution Center during World War II. Also gone was the ivy-covered church which stood on the Biltmore Avenue entrance up to the main college building.

Elizabeth Boyd Memorial Chapel, 1936

However, the effects of these schools have been felt across this community by the teachers who taught tens of thousands of children. These schools improved the quality of life for mountain people.

Three other schools were on Victoria Road with their property later becoming part of the present campus of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College: St. Genevieve's, St Francis High School, and Asheville Catholic School.

St. Genevieve's

In 1910, the Sisters of Hillside Convent, which was a Catholic school occupying two buildings at the end of North Main Street in Asheville, knew more room was needed for its growing enrollment. In this year Victoria Inn on Victoria Road became available. The Inn had "changed hands many times so the Sisters were able to purchase it." At this time the name was changed to St. Genevieve's College, although "the college had not been formed or organized." Eighteen sisters and about sixty boarding high school students moved to the former Victoria Inn. Also, at this time there was a preparation school, grades 1-8, for boys and girls. Later, when kindergarten students were enrolled, the school was changed to St. Genevieve's of the Pines. [Potts, Mother Margaret, RCE., 1991, Carolina Day School. p. 11]

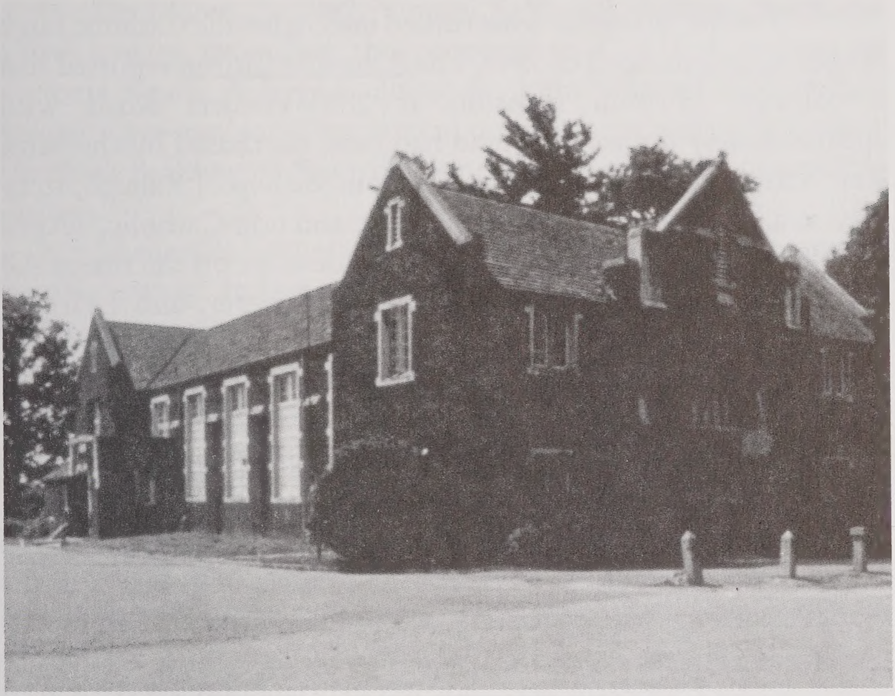
Mother Monk told a reporter, as she recalled, that this name as "college" was inappropriate. "You see, our children ranged from grammar school age through college, and it was really ridiculous to see little first grade boys printing Saint Genevieve's College on their papers." [Asheville Citizen, September ll, 1961]

At first, the Victoria Inn itself was the whole school. The ballroom was used for a study hall and an auditorium. The largest parlor was turned into a chapel. The gymnasium on the basement floor was used for the grammar school. Classrooms were added to the lower level over the years. Water was no longer stored in the tower by 1910, but the tower was used for recreational purposes and afforded an excellent view of Asheville. [Potts, p.11] In 1923, part of the left wing of the veranda was taken off to "make way for the new chapel." [Batcheder, Maydean. Voice of the The Pines, May 1951]

By 1912. college courses started being offered when Mother Margaret MacSwiney returned to the school after being the first nun to receive her Ph. D. from Catholic University. In 1913, St. Genevieve's Academy became a charter member and accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. [Potts, p. 12] After Mother Deplanck, founder of the school, died on January 2, 1915, a requiem mass for her was held in St. Lawrence Church in Asheville. "After the funeral, a procession formed behind Mother Deplanck's coffin and walked from St. Lawrence Church down Biltmore Avenue and out to St. Genevieve's. Mother Deplanck was buried in a little grove of pine trees where the auditorium stands. A row of boxwoods about eight inches high was planted around her grave." [Potts, p.14] Her body was moved in 1936 when the auditorium was built. Mother Marie Louise Lorin was the second Mother Superior at St. Genevieve's. [Potts, p. 14]

The first records for a commencement exercises were for fourteen high school students on May 31, 1915. [Potts, p.14] The school had four departments: the school for secretaries, the academy, the girls' grammar school, and boys' Gibbons Hall. Enrollments continued to grow with 271 students in 1977-78 but started declining by 1982. In 1987, Saint Genevieve/Gibbons Hall and Asheville Country Day School merged into Carolina Day School on Hendersonville Road. [Potts, p. 95]

Asheville-Buncombe Technical College acquired this property, containing 12.77 acres, and its four buildings on September 23, 1987, when the property was purchased for the college by the Buncombe County Commissioners. The Catholics had sold off portions of their property before A-B Tech purchased it. The area between St. Genevieve's and Oakland Avenue which currently has two doctors' office buildings and on the north side



St. Genevieve's Auditorium, Courtesy Harvey Haynes and Shirley McLaughlin

where Hillhaven Rest Home is located had been sold before 1987. [Bailey Interview, fall 1995]

The former St. Genevieve's buildings in use today by A-B Tech include Pinto Hall which is now Poplar Building and houses the day care center; Sharry Hall which is now The Pines and houses the Continuing Education offices and classrooms and the Adult Basic programs; the auditorium which is now Ivy Building, being used for the decorative arts restoration classes. Madonna Hall has been leased by A-B Tech to Religious of Christian Education and houses the Sisters who taught at St. Genevieve's.

St. Francis High School

The beginnings of what turned into Asheville Catholic High School started in April of 1949. The Asheville Citizen reported that a colonial 19-room mansion at 285 Victoria Road with approximately ten acres of land had been purchased by the Most Rev. Vincent S. Waters, Roman Catholic Bishop of Raleigh, to be used as a high school for boys, Catholic and non-Catholic. [April 4, 1949] This home/mansion and its gardens sat on the site of AB Tech's current Oak Gymnasium, student center, and Learning Resources Center.

The school was operated by the Friars' Minor Conventual with headquarters in Syracuse, N. Y. The school opened in September of 1949 with thirteen boys in eighth, ninth, and tenth grades, with the eleventh and twelfth grade classes to be added in 1950. The four teachers in the school were members of the Franciscan Order of St. Francis. St. Francis of Assisi was the school's patron. More property was purchased in 1951 and 1953. [Asheville Citizen, April 12, 1951]

The high school was officially St. Francis until the fall of 1954 when it became co-educational and the Asheville Catholic High School.

Asheville Catholic High School

Bishop Waters said that a physical expansion program of the Asheville High School would begin with construction of new classrooms and a gymnasium. (These buildings became what is now the remodeled Laurel Building and Oak Gymnasium before its expansion with the student center and book store of A-B Tech.) There would no longer be boarding facilities for students on the campus and the Franciscans would no longer be conducting the school as they had since 1949. [Asheville Citizen, June 11, 1954] In the fall of 1959, the first wing of the new classroom building plus the auditorium and gymnasium opened.

On March 15, 1962, Vincent S. Waters, Bishop, purchased more acreage extending the property to Oakland Avenue at Victoria Road. A large building, St. John Vianney Hall, which became a pre-seminary, was erected on this site which is the present Hemlock Building of Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College.

"Asheville Catholic High students attend school in a most historic setting. In fact, many go to classes in a building that is an authentic museum of history. The McDowell House at 283 Victoria Road in the middle of the high school campus is believed to be the oldest house in Asheville." The McDowell House presided over the main road into town "once the Buncombe Turnpike." "Other places on the campus have like historical significance. The Baker home with its superb formal gardens once occupied the spot where the gym now stands. Outlines of the garden are still visible out back." [Asheville Citizen, March 29, 1970]

"Once upon a time Victoria Road boasted of the exclusive estates in Asheville." Asheville Catholic High School renamed "Fernihurst" as "Mount Mary." Two Memminger homes were nearby. [Asheville Citizen, March 29, 1970]

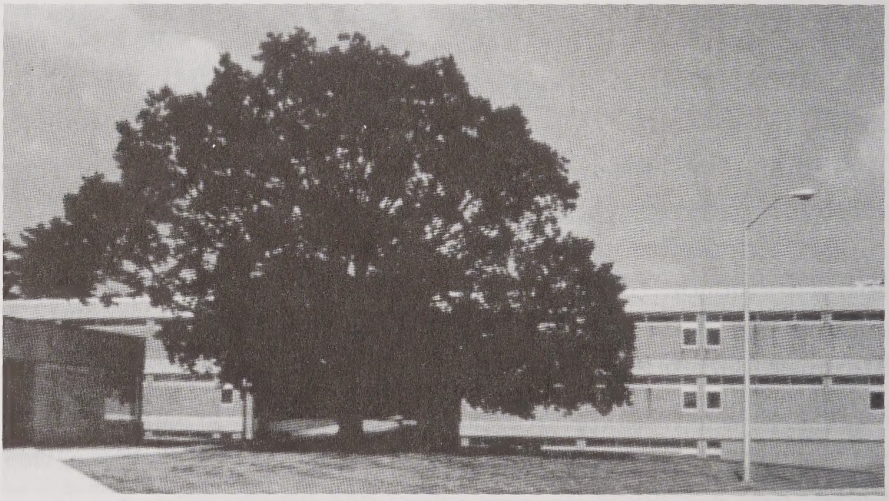
"Conservation President Theodore Roosevelt's secretary, Gifford Pinchot [first trained American forester], is said to have planted the big beech tree near the main classroom building. Roosevelt is supposed to have stood on the grounds of Mount Mary to the rear of the school, looked across the river toward Pisgah and dreamed of a great national forest." [Asheville Citizen, March 29, 1970].

Theodore Roosevelt was President of the United States from

1901 - 1908. Although the story of Theodore Roosevelt's standing and gazing at Pisgah while his secretary planted a beech tree, that still stands, on a campus sounds improbable, there is a possible and reasonable explanation.

Colonel Connally and his wife, the former Alice Thomas, lived at Fernihurst during Theodore Roosevelt's presidential terms. Alice Thomas Connally's sister was Gabrielle (Gay) Thomas who married Richmond Pearson and lived at Richmond Hill in Asheville. Mr. Pearson served as American minister to Persia, Greece, and Montenegro under President Theodore Roosevelt. [Frances Arthur McDowell, "A History of Fernihurst," 1989]

President Roosevelt could have been visiting his foreign minister Pearson, brother-in-law of Mrs. Connally, and being entertained at Fernihurst. To make this story even more plausible, in Cabins and Castles, [p. 78], a picture shows a large crowd of people on the Public Square in Asheville in 1902 who had come to hear President Theodore Roosevelt speak. Roosevelt was in Asheville and probably stayed with people that he knew.



The Beech Tree between Laurel and Elm Buildings. Courtesy of Harvey Haynes and Shirley McLaughlin.

In the fall of 1995, A-B Tech's carpentry students, under the direction of Leslie Walker, chairperson, built a slotted wooden platform to keep the roots of this Beech tree from being damaged. The massive beech tree, probably 93 years old, is still standing and being protected.

After an expensive building project with expectations of growth in the future, Asheville Catholic High School announced its closing with the commencement exercises on June 3, 1972. "I would call it an agonizing death of a school," stated Father Edward J. Sheridan, administrator at Asheville Catholic High School. Only 39 students had registered for the fall of 1972, not enough financially to operate the school. [Asheville Citizen, May 11, 1972]

Title to the former Asheville Catholic High School property with its 78.08 acres was transferred to Asheville Buncombe Technical Institute in May of 1974 for $859,000. [Asheville Citizen, May 28, 1974]. Before this date A-B Tech had only 28 acres. Not only was acreage added but also a classroom building, a gymnasium, Smith-McDowell House, and Fernihurst.

St. John Vianney Hall, the pre-seminary school, on its 7.47 acres was purchased in 1979 and became the current Hemlock Building. This building was first used for the law enforcement programs and the emergency medical program along with its being used as offices for the Buncombe County Board of Education.

J. B. Edwards, former Director of Personnel, said he felt the officials of the Roman Catholic Church could have sold this acreage and the existing buildings for much more money but gave A-B Tech an offer so that education would be continued on these same grounds. [Personal interview] Instead of apartment buildings or condominiums, there is still a school, and Fernihurst and the Smith-McDowell House have been preserved.

Conclusion

Perhaps most who came in contact with the Victoria vicinity had dreams. The adventurous travelers who took their stock over the section of the dusty old Buncombe Turnpike which became Victoria Road went with hopes of success -- gaining material profit and learning more about their world.

The Civil War and the "Big" depression were felt by the people who lived on Victoria Road. The wealthy residents rode in their carriages back and forth to the Biltmore Estate. Also, while many of them had luxurious periods for a while, some fell upon "hard times."

Students have come to the Victoria vicinity for over a hundred years, studying and living nearby. Perhaps these realized more from their experiences than any of the others -- something instilled that did not vanish, even though the schools themselves are gone.

When A-B Tech was created with a hope to prepare students for a better life, a more suitable location could not have been chosen that Victoria Road. Perhaps with the varied heritage that ties back to this area, there should have been no doubt that the school had to grow and succeed in helping students to realize more dreams. The same Victoria route had been followed since the late 1700s.

Chapter 2

THE BEGINNINGS AND PROGRESS OF ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION CENTER

The start of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College goes back to the late 1950s when many people saw the need for more diversified and less expensive education than regular colleges could provide for many high school graduates or for students who had not graduated or for adults who needed new skills. Diversification was needed to provide skilled workers for growing industries in Western North Carolina. Plus, the people of North Carolina were willing to provide funds for this need.

In North Carolina, studies had been made during 1957 and 1958 relative to the needs for programs of industrial education throughout the state, and a proposal for the development of a statewide system of Industrial Education Centers was adopted by the State Board of Education. [Asheville Citizen, August 31, 1961] The funds for the program development were provided by the General Assembly and the National Defense Education Act in 1958. The local community investment would be matched by the state with machinery and equipment as well as qualified teachers for trade programs. [Asheville Citizen, March 19, 1959] The local community had to show backing for this effort before it could become a reality.

In Western North Carolina, the beginning of this instructional operation, known as the Trade and Industrial Vocation Education Program, was at Lee Edwards High School. [Asheville Citizen, March 19, 1959] Floyd P. Gehres was director of the program. This program had spread to other areas of Western North Carolina but taught at various locations with no actual training center with buildings established. While the Center was administered by the Asheville City Board of Education in cooperation with the Buncombe County Board of Education "under the auspices of the State Board of Education and the Department of Trade and Industrial Education," it was intended to serve fifteen Western North Carolina counties. [Learn to Earn thru Trade and Technical Training Catalog, Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center, 1961-1962.]

Herb Coman, an original trustee of the school said that Mr. Gehres was instrumental in encouraging the local community to get involved with this project. "He came to me and others with the information that funding was available for an industrial training center and that someone needed to act promptly. He saw the potential for the program." Mr. Coman had been instrumental in wanting a Center in Asheville since he had been involved in education since 1945 and also saw the needs of industry from his association with Beacon Manufacturing Company from 1956. Mr. Coman talked with the Swannanoa Men's Club and encouraged support for the Center. The local Kiwanis Clubs were notified. Coke Candler, Buncombe County Commissioner, worked to get the Center. The support of businessmen, educators, and community helped to make the possibility of a Center in Western North Carolina closer to a reality. [Interview, fall, 1995.]

Location and Initial Buildings

Asheville had been "accepted as the general area for the location of a proposed industrial education center" as early as 1958 by the State Board of Education, but this was subject to the appropriation of funds by the 1959 General Assembly and on the condition that adequate buildings were provided. [Asheville

Citizen-Times, March 3, 1959]

The local community had to furnish the buildings and the grounds. Specific guidelines were set up by a survey committee that the school would require 28,600 square feet of space for training shops plus 4,500 square feet for classrooms and at least 15 acres for the training center's location. "Building funds for the joint Asheville-Buncombe County project were voted in a county-wide bond election in June of 1959." [Asheville Citizen, August 31, 1961] Construction costs for the industrial education center for $300,000 were approved by the City School Board. [Asheville Citizen, November 18, 1959] A "matching" $300,000 for equipment and salaries would come from state funds.

Location on Victoria Road

Four sites for the center had been considered. Biltmore School on Hendersonville Road had been offered but was rejected in February 1959 because of the lack of the required 15 acres. Other sites were being considered: Lee Edwards High School, Asheville-Biltmore College site, or the site of the old State Test Farm adjoining the original Owen High School near Swannanoa. [Asheville Citizen, March 19, 1959]. The 21-acre tract adjoining Lee Edwards High School on Victoria Road was chosen. This tract was already owned by the City School Board. The Asheville City Board of Education in 1961 consisted of Mrs. Don R. Printz, Traynham Houston, Beaman L. Pinner, Michael F. Keleher, Phil N. Sales, and W. P. Griffin. The Executive Advisory Committee included L. F. Zerfoss, John M. Barnes, Coke Candler, J. Gerald Cowan, T. C. Roberson, and W. P. Griffin.

The beginnings started in 1959 before a building could be constructed on the Victoria Road site with a goal to enroll three to four hundred students in the first year. Floyd P. Gehres was to continue as the director of the center. The assistant to Mr. Gehres and guidance coordinator was Thomas Willard Simpson who had been director of diversified occupations at Lee Edwards High School since 1955. City and county students were eligible for tuition-free trade and technical training for classes, and day classes were also open to out-of-school youth and adults. By the year 1960, over one thousand students had enrolled in the programs in various locations.

In order to make sure that students were being trained for jobs that existed or would exist, a close association with industry was developed. Lester F. Zerfoss, who was director of industrial relations and management services for American Enka Corporation, was named chairman of a 33-member general advisory committee for the Asheville-Buncombe County Industrial Education Center. This committee was to determine the training needs of the area, develop community understanding and support, advise the school administrators and boards regarding trade and technical training. The members included the executives of companies in Western North Carolina as well as county and city school personnel. [Asheville Citizen, December 4,1959] By May of 1963 in an article by Philip Clark and Bruce Gourlay [Asheville Citizen, May 24,1963, "Why Our Center Forged Ahead"] "Everyone concerned agreed that this glove-tight working relationship between the people who do the job training and the people who do the hiring is a key to the Asheville-Buncombe center's fine record."

By January of 1961, Thomas W. Simpson had become the director of the Industrial Education Center. The buildings on Victoria Road were not ready, so his office was in the City Building and programs only offered at night. The programs being offered were machine shop, basic electronics technology, electronics technology, electrical apprentice.

First Buildings

The two buildings which were the beginning of the school were started in the fall of 1959.

The Results of the First Two Buildings by 1963.

On March 12, 1961, the Asheville Citizen-Times reported, "Asheville and Buncombe County's $600,000 Industrial Education Center on Victoria Road complete now except for a few cleanup chores, will begin opening up for business this week." Thomas W. Simpson stated that the "adult night classes now being held in Lee Edwards vocational building" would be transferred to the Center as rapidly as equipment became operational and that classes for selected high school students would be started in September of 1961 on a half-day basis. [Philip Clark]

Building "A" of the center contained the industrial chemistry-physics and instrumentation laboratory, a technical drafting and design laboratory, five classrooms, administrative offices and a student lounge. (Mr. Simpson told Jack Davis, who arrived for his job interview when a chemical experiment with sulfur was going on that, as the school's director, he must have been a fool to have his office placed by the laboratory.)

Building "B" contained an automotive shop, a machine shop, an electronics laboratory, a welding shop, an industrial electricity laboratory, and an air conditioning, refrigeration and sheet metal shop. [Asheville Citizen-Times, March 12, 1961] Classrooms were always essential in the school's program since the students' time in the programs was divided by about fifty percent in background studies such as mathematics, science, blueprint reading, drafting, etc. and fifty percent in learning manipulative skills in shops and laboratories. Sometimes it came as a surprise to students that they would be expected to take additional courses, called related or core courses, as well as the subjects required by the curriculum. By 1963, these courses included English, mathematics, chemistry (depending upon the program), physics, sociology.

"To assist students to `learn to earn' more than $500,000 worth of equipment ranging from air conditioning units to welding facilities, has been installed in the two buildings. The machine shop alone contains in excess of $200,000 worth of tools." ["Center Begins Classes, September 5," Asheville Citizen, August 31, 1961.] A 1963 graduate stated he was impressed with the lab equipment. Another graduate, who was in industry at the time he attended, was surprised at the new equipment.

The new facilities would allow 600 to 700 students to be instructed in morning, afternoon, and evening shifts.

In addition to pre-employment training for high school students, the center would be offering upgrading type classes for employed workers in machine shop, sheet metal, slide rule mathematics, electrical apprentice, electrical code, and blueprint reading.

Most courses, except for welding and electronics technology, were designed for half-day classes for eight quarters or two years.

With the start of the fall term in 1962, the enrollment at the 15-month-old Industrial Education Center had doubled with shops and laboratories being used twelve hours per day. Director Thomas W. Simpson said in an interview with reporter Bruce Gourlay, Asheville Citizen, December 11, 1962, that classes were being held in the library and in laboratories. The book store was an adapted broom closet.

In 1959, the library was opened with a donated collections of books and a part-time librarian was hired. In 1960 and 1961, the library was housed in a very small, closet-like space in the administrative office area of "A" building.

Mr. Simpson proposed to the City School Board in 1962 that a third building of 20,000 square feet at a cost of $200,000 was needed. The building was to be used to expand existing programs and to add a technical secretarial area, a cabinetmaking and carpentry area, and an agricultural technology area. Mr. Simpson further reported to Bruce Gourlay that 695 students attending 46 classes at the Victoria Road Center and that 1,513 attended the 64 classes away from the Center. The enrollment had more than doubled from 1961.

In citing the need for the third building on the Victoria Road campus, "Simpson pointed out that of the 20 industrial education centers in the state (four had not begun operation), the Asheville Industrial Education Center in 1962 ranked 14th in facilities and investment but ranked 3rd in the total contact hours of instruction (hours the students spent in front of his teacher)." [Asheville Citizen, December 11, 1952]

The funds for the third building were approved by the City

School Board in February 1963 when it signed an application for a $200,000 loan from the State Literary Fund of the State Board of Education.

Students

The beginning of the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center started in 1959 with a goal to enroll three to four hundred students in the first year. In 1960, "there were 1,100 adults enrolled in the trade and industrial classes in the present Lee Edwards vocational building." [Asheville Citizen-Times, March 12, 1961]

With the completion of the two buildings, then named "A" and "B," the night classes could be moved from Lee Edwards, and high school seniors would start attending classes on a half-day basis in the fall of 1961. The new facilities would allow 600 to 700 students to be instructed in morning, afternoon, and evening shifts.

High school students attended their regular high schools for one-half day to receive their academic instruction and commuted to the Center to receive their vocational courses the other half day. They were granted high school credit for their class and shop work in the Industrial Education Center. Out-of-school young people attended one-half day or a full school day. [Learn To Earn Catalog, 1961-62.]

This was a city-county school; therefore, high school students could attend tuition free except for a registration fee of $2.00, but adults would pay $7.50 to $10.00 per month, depending upon the hours attended. Textbooks were sold at cost to all students plus a few personal tools and safety glasses for some courses.

For the first seven months in the 1961-62 school year, 1,500 students enrolled in courses at the Industrial Education Center.

From July 1962 through February 1963, it had enrolled 2,703 students. Bruce Gourlay, Asheville-Citizen reporter, stated on August 4, 1963, "It's been two years since the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center opened its doors to admit its first student. Since that time, the center has doubled its enrollment yearly and to date has enrolled more that 7,000 students , men and women, in all areas of its comprehensive educational programs."

A graduate in 1963 stated that the school gave him "the necessary knowledge and skill" for his career. "Industry was pleased that training like this was available. It gave me an edge whenever I sought employment." Another 1963 graduate said that "going to AB Tech as a high school student has attributed to everything I have today." Another 1963 graduate said, "The school seemed interested in every student. I enjoyed being there."

Arthur Davis in Foreground in the Drafting Class at the Industrial Education Center in 1963.

Administrators and Staff

Until the spring of 1961 when the Victoria Road buildings were completed, the few administrators and staff worked from the 8th floor of the Asheville City Hall. "The staff of the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center, headed by Thomas Willard Simpson, is reinforced by committees containing a cross-section of top industrialists, professionals, and businessmen in this area." Harvey Lee Haynes was hired as the counselor-coordinator for the center. Brewster C. Adams became the night supervisor. [Asheville Citizen, August 31, 1961] Jane G. Smith was secretary to the director.

In addition to these staff members, the 1961-1962 catalog stated that John W. (Jack) Davis was the associate director, J. B. Edwards, Jr., was the assistant director for agricultural technology, David Williams was the distributive education program specialist, Mrs. Jessie P. Goforth and Frances Nelson were secretaries.

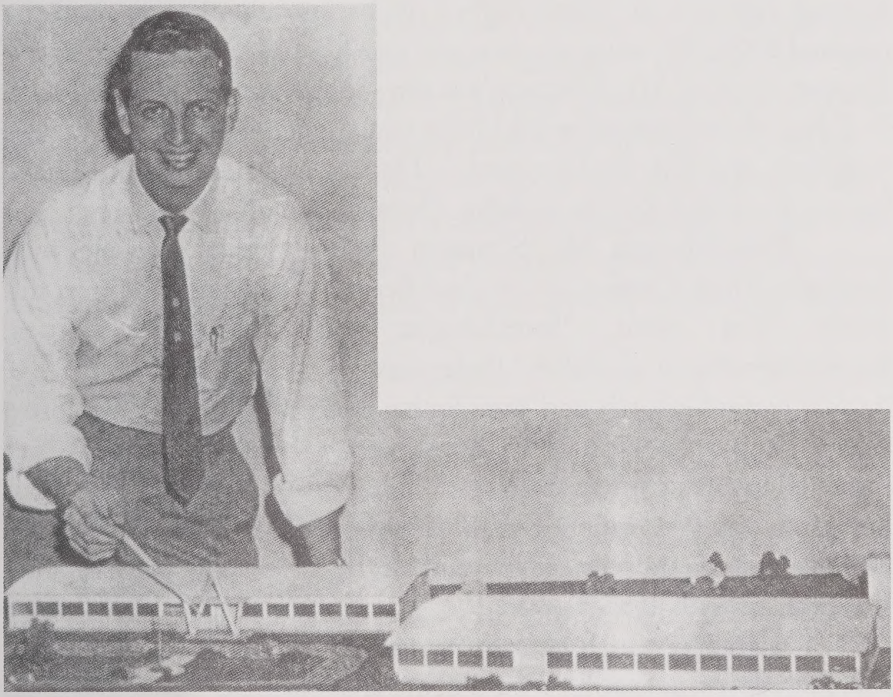
Administrators

Thomas Simpson, a native of Cullowhee, N. C., had received his degree in Industrial Arts and mathematics at Western Carolina College in 1950. He had done graduate work at Western Carolina and North Carolina State College. From 1950 - 1959, he had taught in several high schools, including Sand Hill and Enka in Buncombe County before being counselor-coordinator of Industrial Education under Floyd P. Gehres. Mr. Simpson was appointed as director in 1960. [Asheville Citizen, August 31, 1961]

J. B. Edwards stated that Tom Simpson felt good results with the Center had to be shown immediately because, if not, the state funds could stop. There was no "long range" commitment from the state until the formation of the Department of

Community Colleges in 1963. Programs had to be started, funds had to be obtained, local businessmen, industrialists, educators had to see positive results of any particular school in order to have faith in this new type of industrial center. Students had to come. [Interview, fall, 1995]

In remembrances, Mr. Simpson was a positive "people" person who could communicate well with all groups. Brewster Adams felt he was one who liked and understood people and that he was fair with people and was a progressive administrator. Dave Robinson, former Board of Trustee member, and Lowell Smith, retired Dean of Continuing Education, both agreed that Mr. Simpson was "the right person at the right time" and one who knew exactly what industry needed.



Thomas Simpson with Model Buildings in 1961.

Jack Davis felt that Mr. Simpson hired good people and let them do their jobs. Harvey Haynes stated that Mr. Simpson was an expert at hiring the right people for the positions. "He chose people with different backgrounds. It worked." [Interviews, fall, 1995]

Jane Smith, who worked with Mr. Simpson from his start as Director and later when he was President, said that Mr. Simpson was determined the school would be a success. She felt he was more determined to have this success since he felt Floyd Gehres did not have confidence that the school would succeed. Mr. Simpson had confidence but worked very hard to back his confidence. "He was excellent at putting funding packages together for projects." [Interview, fall, 1995]

Jane Smith also said that Mr. Simpson stated he should have had the foresight to "think big" in the beginning -- bigger than the original $300,000, since money was available at this time. Harvey Haynes recalled Mr. Simpson's saying that if he had listened to J. B. Edwards the school would have stayed its original size of three buildings, and if he had listened to Harvey Haynes he would have been ten million dollars in debt. [Interview, fall, 1995]

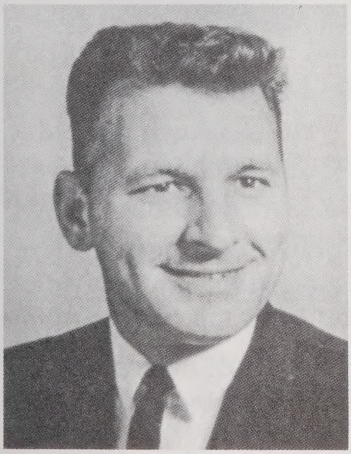
Even though Mr. Simpson did not credit himself with foresight, Herb Coman, an original Board of Trustee member, did credit him with "forethought, organizational abilities, knowledgeable in all fields." [Interview]

Jessie Goforth and Jane Smith both thought Mr. Simpson was a "super" person with employees. "He was honest and expected loyalty from employees." Chef Bob Werth said that Tom Simpson showed much kindness and concern and interest in employees and students. "He would let the instructors experiment." [Interviews, fall, 1995]

A special touch that many employees remembered about Mr. Simpson was that he would bring their paychecks around each month. He would ask how everything was going and thank them for the jobs they were doing. This personal contact once a month made employees feel their services were appreciated. One employee remembered that in the other places she had worked "after school" meetings were used to tell the faculty and staff members everything they had done wrong over the past month. The dread of her first meeting turned to pleasant amazement. Mr. Simpson detailed what an excellent job everyone was doing. This appreciative attitude made many employees work harder.

Harvey Lee Haynes, a native of Weaverville, N. C., was hired as counselor-coordinator for the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center on May 2, 1961. He was graduated from Western Carolina College with a double major, business education and industrial arts. Before coming to the Center, he had taught at North Buncombe High School and had been a product designer at the General Electric Corporation in Hendersonville. While at GE, he taught "off campus" courses for the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Center, including tool and dye apprentices in drafting, geometry, and basic blue print reading.

As counselor-coordinator, he wrote curriculums based upon what local industries needed and designed scheduling for students. Mr. Haynes felt that industry was "demanding" and that the school must insist upon quality from instructors and student applicants.



Harvey Haynes, 1963,
Supervisor of Instruction

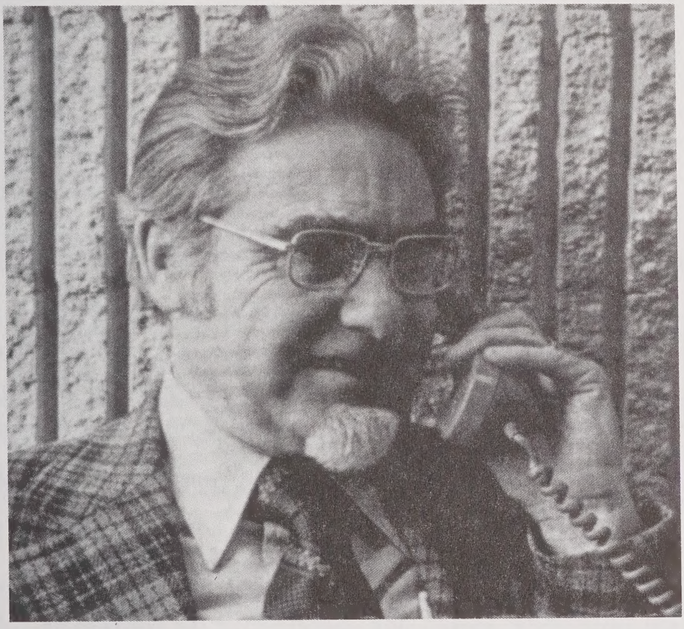
Because of Mr. Haynes's educational and industrial experience he was approached by Preston S. Marchant, Chairman of the Greenville Technical Education Center, South Carolina, to be director of the first post-secondary school in that state. This offer to Mr. Haynes was officially made by Greenville's committee on October 16, 1961. Mr. Haynes at first declined this offer because he had much loyalty and much faith in Asheville's center. He decided on November l to accept the offer and was employed on December l, 1961.

Mr. Haynes was the first director and laid the foundation for the very successful Greenville Technical Community College. He had led this college from its construction phase to its opening with "staff in place" but decided to come "back home" to the Asheville-Buncombe Center, starting February 13, 1963. The South Carolina state committee on March 30, 1964, stated that he was owned "a debt of gratitude" for his "unselfish devotion to duty during those hectic initial days of construction, equipping, and staffing" their regional schools. For his service to Greenville Tech, he was honored in 1965 when the Governor of South Carolina declared "Harvey Haynes Day."

Mr. Haynes became dean of instruction, a new position at AB Tech in July of 1963. He held this position until July of 1975. He felt that the success of the graduates from AB Tech brought other students and that parents in the communities realized that AB Tech had something to offer. During Mr. Haynes' tenure, seventy-two industries were brought into Western North Carolina and directly linked with AB Tech. Herb Coman felt that Harvey Haynes knew what kind of programs were needed because he had a knowledge and understanding of the total community college system -- plus a "vision of what could be." [Asheville Citizen news articles, interview, personal papers]

Brewster C. Adams became night administrator of Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center on August l,

1961. He was a graduate of the University of Alabama from the School of Commerce and Business Administration and received a degree from the School of Law in 1952. Mr. Adams had been with the Employment Security Commission in Asheville and Hendersonville from 1955 until his position at the school.
[Asheville Citizen, August 31, 1961]



Brewster Adams, Director of Evening Programs, 1977.

Mr. Adams, as night administrator, in his early years at the Industrial Center was responsible for scheduling students, hiring faculty, interpreting transfer students' transcripts, selling textbooks, doing the evening payroll, creating the school's catalog. As the number of students grew at the school, the department chairpersons started hiring the night personnel, a bookstore was opened, the catalog was taken over by others. He became Director of the

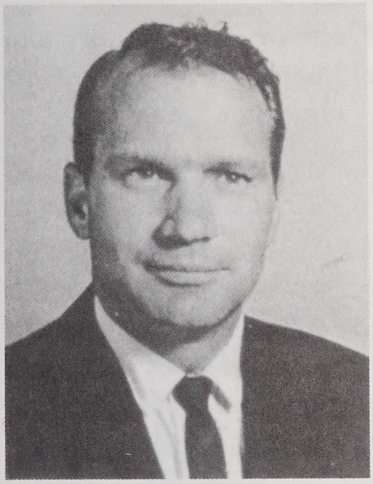
Evening Programs and Dean of the Evening programs until his retirement on May 1, 1985.

He felt that the night program was always a success because of the courses offered, the faculty members, and the students. While the majority of the community colleges offered most continuing education courses at night, AB Tech offered the same courses as during the day with a few exceptions, such as nursing, hospitality, and chemistry technology. The two-year day programs were set up for three-year night programs. Many of the night instructors were from industry and did not have training in teaching, but Mr. Adams felt that they tried harder because of this to make sure they explained and that the students understood. He felt that the night students who, on the whole, worked full-time had sacrificed more to attend school and, perhaps, appreciated the opportunity more.

Mr. Adams had fun working with the cooperative staff at AB Tech during his twenty-four years and enjoyed particularly working with department chairpersons such as Tom Gaffigan and Dick White. He always felt that the school would be successful but never pictured that it would become so amazingly large and attractive. [Interview, fall, 1995]

Jack W. Davis was hired as associate director by Mr. Simpson on January 1, 1962. Mr. Davis said he remembered when there were a total of 14 administrators, staff, and faculty members who all seemed glad to be at AB Tech. Employees were all piled in together and all did the various jobs Mr. Simpson asked.

By 1964, Jack Davis was director of student personnel. In 1969, he was appointed as Dean of Student Services. He emphasized that he did not do recruiting for the school. His philosophy of counseling was to tell students about what AB Tech had to offer and to let them decide if the school had something to offer them. He had plenty of opportunities since he visited 45 high schools, twice a year, in the fifteen county area of Western North Carolina.



Jack Davis, 1963,
Associate Director

Jack Davis always believed in the "open door" policy for AB Tech. He felt if a student wanted to attend, there was some course of study in some field for everyone. Entrance testing was practiced at the school from its beginnings. With this testing, potential students could be counseled on what field or fields they could be successful in.

When Jack learned that "peer tutor" money was available from the State, he asked mr. Simpson if he could try to get funds for this arrangement at AB Tech. Mr. Simpson agreed and Jack obtained this successful combination of being able to pay students who were capable in a course to help students, outside of class, who were having difficulties in the subject.

Before Jack Davis's retirement in 1992, he was vice-president of student services with eleven staff members serving this office.

J. B. Edwards was hired on July 1, 1962. He, at that time, was agricultural technical coordinator before he became the director of the extension program in 1964. During his serving as director of extension, he supervised the directors at the Jackson, McDowell, Tri-County, and Haywood Industrial Education Centers. He then became business manager in 1967 before being dean of occupational education in 1975. In 1976, he became director of personnel, a position he held until his retirement on August 31, 1983. (Mr. Edwards was one who wore "many hats" at the school, but he wore each one well.)

J. B. Edwards, 1963, Coordinator

He said a hard chore at the time he was director of personnel was trying to "wade through" all the new regulations created by the civil rights legislation. He said that AB Tech was integrated from the start; so, with new regulations, he carefully deleted the questions asking race of student on the admission forms, thinking this was how it should be done. To his surprise, the next year he was asked how many "minorities" had applied. He had no way of knowing, so the student admission form had to be changed again.

J. B. Edwards said that one accomplishment he is proudest of is setting up a pay scale that was more equitable for all employees.

By 1963, James R. Cox had replaced David Williams as distributive education program specialist.

Jane G. Smith was the first employee hired for the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center. She was first hired as secretary to the director, Floyd Gehres. Upon his leaving, she continued as Thomas Simpson's secretary, then administrative assistant.

Jane G. Smith, 1963, Secretary to Director

When she and Mr. Simpson moved into the then new "A" building on Victoria Road in 1961, with more students, another secretary needed to be hired. In response to an advertisement Jane had placed the newspaper, she received one outstanding professional resume. This applicant sounded like the perfect person for the job. Jane called to set up an interview.

On the particular morning Jane called the applicant, there had been a name change at the applicant's current place of employment. Bost's Bakery had just become Bunny Bread.

Jane called and the answerer said in a perky voice, "Bunny rabbit." Jane burst into laughter, and then the answerer started laughing for several minutes before Jane could ask to speak to Jessie Plemmons. The answerer admitted she was Jessie. To Jessie's surprise, Jane still wanted her to come for the interview. Jane said she just had to see what this person was like.

Jane held the position of administrative assistant until she returned to college at Western Carolina University and upon graduation became an instructor at A-B Tech in the business education division in marketing for six years. She became the director of personnel in 1983 and continued this position until she retired from AB Tech in August of 1991. At this time Jane entered into another new field that she felt was influenced by her work with young people. She was accepted into an Episcopal Seminar and received her Masters of Divinity. She is currently the priest at Grace Episcopal Church in Asheville. [Interview fall, 1995] Mr. Simpson hired multi-talented people.

Jessie Goforth was hired in July 1961 as a secretary, was by 1966 a bookkeeper, and is still employed at AB Tech as an accountant. Jessie moved from "A" building to the "Green House." Then when the furnace "blew up," into the motel rooms before the new Administration Building was built. Jessie thought the new building was so luxurious after all the cramped quarters she had been in, but she and Jane both missed the "closeness" of earlier times.

MRS. GOFORTH

Jessie Goforth, Secretary, 1963

At first there was only one telephone in "A" building, so B. E. Haynes who taught machine shop, built Jane and Jessie a telephone stand that had a swivel, allowing them to push the phone back and forth between their adjoining desks. Jane said that everybody had to get along in those close confines because, "We didn't have room to fight." People worked together for the good of the school were the sentiments of Jane and Jessie. Jane feels it would take three people to replace Jessie in her position as accountant because of the superb work she does for AB Tech.

Frances Nelson Johnson first became interested in the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center when, in 1961, she came to help her brother, Steve Creasman, electronics instructor, set up electronic lab experiments and reports. At this time she was working at WWNC radio station as a studio engineer. (She was the second woman in North Carolina to become a licensed radio engineer and worked at WWNC from 1941 - 1965.)

Miss NELSON

Frances Johnson, Secretary, 1963.

While at the Center, Mrs. Johnson worked without pay in the office for two years before she was put on the state payroll. She was over students' records in 1966 and named as the first registrar in 1968, a position she held until her retirement in 1987. Mr. Bailey said that when it was decided a registrar was needed for the growing school, administrators realized they already had one and did not need to look further. [Interviews, fall 1995]

Mrs. Johnson had designed an inventory system for keeping up with students' records that the state copied. She took data processing at AB Tech under Gene Goode when there were no programs but only the wire boards. From 1965 - 1987 there were nine different changes in the data processing procedures. She said quite a few changes had to take place from 1961 with about sixty students' records to 1987 with sixty-six thousand which had to be entered for a new program.

She said her best experiences involved working and counseling with the students who attended the night classes. Mrs. Johnson was not afraid of challenges or hard work. She often worked sixteen hours a day when grades needed to be sent out.

Lyman Brown and his wife Evie were the original custodial staff at A-B Industrial Education Center. Ray Bailey stated that Mr. Brown, in addition to his regular position, was the "greeter" and the one who took the deposits to the bank. They were remembered as dedicated staff members by all of the early employees.

Lyman Brown
Evie Brown

Helen Bowers was the first book store manager and the first official cashier. Paul Rout, Sr., was hired in maintenance in the early times of the school.

These early administrators and staff members were dedicated in wanting to make AB Tech a success. This was a time before people seemed to worry about "job descriptions" and did what would help the operation of a growing school.

Harvey Haynes and Jack Davis,
Both Directors,
Doing Their Usual Varied Chores at A-B Tech.

Educational Programs and Faculty

When registration for the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center took place on January 16 - 17, 1961, all the local classes still had to be held in Lee H. Edwards High School Vocational Building. (These classes were to be moved to the Victoria Road campus as soon as the facilities were ready.) [Asheville Citizen, January 8, 1961] The courses to be offered were machine shop, with instructors William E. Black and Earl Elliott; basic electronics technology, with instructors Steve Creasman and Daniel Burns; electronics technology with the same instructors as the basic course; electrical apprentice with Bynum Reese as instructor. These classes were held Monday - Thursday nights from 6:30-10:15.

Day classes began on the Victoria Road campus in the spring of 1961. Night classes at the center began September ll, 1961. There were three "shifts" of classes then to accommodate the high school students who were coming for a half-day: 9-12 a. m.; 1-4 p.m.; 6:30-10:15 p. m.

The diversity of the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center, even from its beginning with its main facilities on the Victoria Road campus, could not be "fitted" into one category. The Center was divided into three different categories: trade level courses with certificates awarded upon completion, technical level courses with a state diploma awarded upon completion, and off campus/extension courses. With these divisions, a cohesive factor, nevertheless, always existed; the administrators, staff, and faculty members worked together to accomplish one basic purpose -- to help their students achieve the education they strived for.

Programs that initially started at the new facilities at the Victoria Road campus were the trade level courses: automotive mechanics, machine shop, welding, technical drafting, and electronics. These courses required, with the four hours per day, eight quarters, with the exception of welding which required four quarters. Only electronics technology, which was a continuation of the electronics course, required twelve quarters. [Learn to Earn Catalog, 1961 - 1962]

Changes occurred rapidly, and by the 1963 - 1964 school year the Center on campus had been divided into three schools: the school of trades, the school of engineering technology, and the school of industrial technology.

The School of Trades

The School of Trades had air conditioning-refrigeration, automotive mechanics, machine shop, welding, radio and television servicing, and farm machinery mechanics.

In 1961-1962, air conditioning, refrigeration, and sheet metal required 1440 hours of study including refrigeration and heating courses, electricity, drafting and blueprint reading, applied science. The instructor was Donald W. White. By 1963 - 1964, this was called air conditioning-refrigeration. Algebra and geometry had been added to this course of study. W. M. Barnard and Ellis Snipes were instructors in 1963. By 1965, Robert L. Parker was its department head. When Bob Parker retired in 1985, William Wells became chairperson. The course of study has basically stayed the same except for adapting it for new technology and updating equipment. This is still a 12-months diploma granting program. This program is now part of the Engineering and Applied Technology division. With the new structuring, William Wells became the chairperson of air conditioning/welding.

In 1961 - 1962, automotive mechanics required 1440 hours of study, including automotive engines, electrical and fuel systems, welding, service and repair, physics, and math. Early instructors included Charles Noblitt and Robert Israel, C. C. White, Dick White, W. M. Pettit. Mr. Noblitt was the department head of automotive until his retirement in 1993. Billy W. Haney joined the automotive staff in 1974 and is currently chairperson. Since 1993, Richard A. Wolfe has been an instructor. This program which is now part of the Engineering and Applied Technology division was restructured in 1994 with a diploma still being offered in the 12 months automotive mechanics, but a new associate degree is available in automotive service technician, requiring two years.

In 1961-1962, machine shop required 1440 hours of study including machine shop practice, blueprint reading, mathematics, applied science, metallurgy. The first instructors were B. E. Haynes, who was a machinist at Kearfott, and Albert Bahr. By 1965, Robert Swann was an instructor in machine shop instead of Albert Bahr. Robert Swan was department chairperson from 1966 until his retirement in 1989. In 1976, the first computer numerical control (CNC) was added to the program to meet the needs of industry. In 1985, a computer system was added for students to learn to program CNC equipment. A CAD/CAM capability was added in 1986.

A 1963 graduate in the machine shop program felt that his training in machine shop under the instruction Of Mr. B. E. Haynes made a big difference in his life, and he was appreciative of the training he received. He said he went to AB Tech initially just to get out of high school classes, but it made a big difference in his life, and he wanted A-B Tech to keep hiring the best possible teachers.

Samuel Barnes has been a machinist instructor since 1988. W. J. Davis was acting department chairperson from 1989 until his retirement. In addition to the regular machine shop program, there is an option offered in the evening program for an additional year in advanced machinist to enable students to have more experience with CNC machining and other technologies. The machine shop program "has served as the main source of entry-level machine shop people for industry in the area since 1962." [Program Overview, Office of Development, 1995] Machine shop is now part of the division of engineering and applied technology with Samuel Barnes as an instructor in machining technology.

The welding program was started in 1961-1962. The first instructor, Stans C. Sluder, was formerly with American Enka Corporation. The welding shop had equipment and facilities that provided instruction in all types of welding as found in arc, gas, and inert arc. Cutting, grinding, and heat treating facilities were also available. Kettron Smathers was hired as a welding instructor in 1963.

Few people have had the respect and love that Stans Sluder had since his employment at A-B Tech in 1961. When Mr. Sluder retired in 1993, he was the division director of the vocational, a position he had held for many years. Mr. Sluder always made the days more pleasant for students, colleagues, staff, and administrators. He was always devoted to the students and the school, being helpful to individuals and agreeable to what was needed for improvement. He not only worked closely with his students in welding but also he encouraged them to apply themselves in their related courses. He would check with other instructors to see how "his" students were progressing. Since his retirement, he has been listed as one of the most missed.

Stans Sluder in the Welding Department, with His Usual Tie.

Stans Sluder was used to being adaptive before he came to A-B Tech. Before he went into World War II, he had flown a crop-dusting plane. Therefore, when he went into the service, he was considered with training as a pilot and became one.

The welding program is still offered, currently as a part of the division of engineering and applied technology.

In the 1963-64 school year, radio and television servicing was offered. This was a needed field at this time when there were tubes to be replaced instead of printed circuit boards and microchips to be thrown away. Since the students spent over half their time in a laboratory doing typical servicing and installation, the school encouraged people to bring their radios and televisions for the students to work on. Only the price for parts was charged. Cletus H. Cantrell was instructor in this field.

In 1967, when this field no longer seemed needed, it was discontinued. However, for years afterwards, people would carry in their radios and television sets expecting the same service. Steve Creasman, after explaining the program was no longer in operation hundreds of time and still having to listen to people wanting their sets fixed anyhow, wrote out a big sign stating "NO RADIOS OR TVS" so he could just point to it if someone walked in with either.

Farm machinery mechanics was another program offered in 1963-64. This program stressed maintenance of farm machinery, particularly tractors. By 1964-65, this had developed into heavy equipment maintenance, for a foundation in diesel engines and hydraulic systems. Mr. Robert H. Israel, who was initially in automotive from 1961, was chairperson of this program until his retirement.

Robert C. Turpin became chairperson in 1984, and David W. Walker, who joined the faculty in 1993, is currently the instructor in diesel vehicle maintenance. This program is now in the division of engineering and applied technology.

The technical drafting and basic electronics were changed to technical programs in order to better train students in depth for changing technologies.

The School of Engineering

The School of Engineering Technology, by the 1963-64 school year, offered drafting and design, industrial electronics, data processing, chemical technology.

Drafting was one of the first programs taught at the Industrial Education Center in 1962. This was originally a "trade" course but was changed to drafting and design technology because of the needs for industry to have a more comprehensive course for students than was originally designed. In 1961, Robert Barnes, who had been employed at American Enka, was the first drafting instructor along with Senate McNeely. By 1963, K. C. Roberts was an instructor. Courses in addition to drafting included mathematics, physics, English, industrial relations. The drafting equipment included tables with parallel straight edges, T-squares, and drafting machines, including a white dry printing machine and a Vu-Graph. [Asheville Citizen, August 31, 1961]

Even by 1963, this program was a success. A graduate at that time wrote that "everything was planned very well and fit with what industry was looking for."

By 1965, W. Carroll Bridges was the department head for drafting and design. Jim Rhea joined the department as a drafting and design instructor in 1965. (Jim Rhea became director of athletics in 1973.) Robert Barnes was back as acting chairman in 1967 until Philip Leese became chairman in 1965. Richard Michael Holcombe was an instructor in 1968 and became chairman in 1971. Paul Keicher was an instructor in 1970.

The basic knowledge and skills for entry-level drafting and design did not change until the early 1980s with industries' installation of computer aided drafting (CAD). In 1984, Michael Holcombe, department chairperson, brought CAD into the classrooms at the college, one of the first two drafting programs in North Carolina community college system to teach CAD. Because of rapid changes in product design and manufacturing methods, the program updates and upgrades course content and laboratory equipment when needed. For example, in the fall of 1992, three-dimensional solid modeling design was added to this program. Computers have had a tremendous impact in the drafting and design with the designer using computers to do the drafting, replacing manual drawings.

In 1994, with new internal structuring at A-B Tech, Larry S. Boyd who had been the department chairperson since 1986, after the death of Mr. Holcombe, became the chairperson of the new machining technology, consisting of the tool design engineering, machinist, and tool, die, and molding making programs. Sheridan Howard, employed in 1985, became the chairperson of drafting and design in 1994 with Nolan Darnell as an instructor, who has been employed in this capacity since 1978.

Graduates of the drafting and design program have worked in every major industry in Western North Carolina. About one-third of each graduating class currently pursues a university degree in technology. An associate in science degree is awarded upon completion of this seven quarter course or fourteen quarter evening course. ["Program Overview," Office of Director of Development]

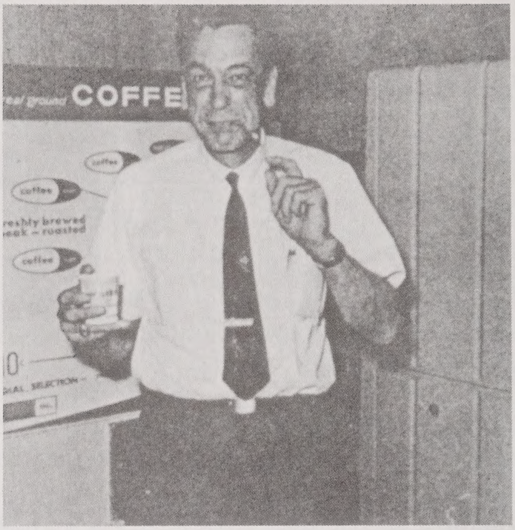
Electronics carried over from the basic electronics that had been taught at Lee Edwards High School as a 1440-hour course in 1962. However, a continuation to a 2160-hour electronics technology program was added for more comprehensive training. Both, in addition to electronic courses, included math and technical drawing. Physics, research, social science were among the courses added for the extra year's continuation. The shorter course was discontinued by the fall of 1963.

Steve Creasman first taught vocational education in the Asheville City schools. When Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center was established, he was the first instructor hired and later became the chairperson of electronics. Also teaching electronics at the Center in 1962 were Daniel Burns and John Kury. [1962 catalog] Harold P. Hamrick was an instructor in electronics from 1964 until 1971 when William Perry Fisher was hired. Mr. Creasman retired in 1977. In 1978, Maynard Bennett was hired as an instructor. Other instructors included Robert D. Wieselman from 1984 until March 1987, Deborah Zanella from 1987 until August 1989. Don H. Lovelace was hired in March 1990 and continued as chairperson until 1994 when he became dean of business and industry services.

Mr. Lovelace added advanced courses including electronic communications, technical documentation, fabrication, analytic trouble shooting, industrial controls, microprocessor interfacing. In 1991, a new certificate program, digital and control systems was developed for industrial retraining. [Program Overview, Department of Development]

After programs were restructured, Robert L. Anderson, who was hired in 1993, became the dean of the division of engineering and applied technology. More recent employees in the electronics program include Frank Miceli who was hired in 1992 and the current chairperson of electronics engineering technology, Stephen Sharar II, and Mark Wright who are instructors in this program.

Steve Creasman served as an instructor and chairperson of electronics from 1961 until his retirement in 1977. Mr. Creasman was remembered as a dedicated instructor who cared about his students and their achievements in the field. He was devoted to the school and its technical purpose. Steve's interest in this field started early in his life. When he was 15 years old, he built his sister a crystal radio in a cigar box for a gift.



B. S. Creasman, 1963, Electronics Instructor.

When his students were having trouble with the mathematics needed for electronics, he divided them into two groups to enable the ones who needed extra help to catch up. He also taped his lectures and provided tape players so students could take these home for extra help. J. B. Edwards remembered being present when a night instructor was telling Steve that three-fourths of his students were just going to fail because they just could not do the work. As he went on and on about his poor students, Steve became more agitated until he finally blurted out, "Well, if three-fourths of your students are failing, you're not doing your ________ job!" Mr. Creasman knew that students could learn if the instructors would take the time and patience to teach them. He was a rare individual.

Mr. Creasman's biggest disappointment was that more jobs for his graduates were not available locally in electronics for his graduates. A 1963 graduate recently remembered Mr. Creasman as being an excellent instructor. This graduate has been in the electronics field for the past thirty-three years and feels "the school and instructors have helped me to have a good life."

Data Processing Technology

The Data Processing technology was first in the 1963 Industrial Education Center's catalog, with its courses basically stressing the business approach. This, of course, was before most people knew what date processing was. The course at that time had to include wire framing and linear programming. The fundamental principles of wiring covered the necessities to perform basic machine functions of printing, punching, comparing, and selection. There was no such things as programs at that time.

This program at A-B Tech was one of the first in the state for computer instruction. N. Eugene Goode was the first chairperson of the data processing department. The department then used an IBM 1620 electromagnetic machine with sorters and cardpunchers. By 1965, when the school of business education was developed, data processing was placed into it. Olin R. Wood was hired as an instructor in mathematics in 1964 and data processing for the 1966 school year. In 1970, a link was installed to an IBM 370 at Raleigh's Research Triangle Park. This enabled programs to be compiled and grades to be sent for processing.

In 1972, the department was renamed electronic data processing. From 1975, new equipment was added along with more laboratories to keep up with this rapidly changing field.

Howard Ray was hired as an instructor in 1972. Mr. Goode did not return in 1974, and Mr. Ray became department chairperson at this time. Richard Ed George was hired as an instructor in 1975. Garnet Pace had been hired as an administrative programmer analyst in 1976 and became an instructor in data processing in 1984. William Propest was named chairperson in

1979, and Sara Morris as acting chairperson in August 1980. In January 1981, Joseph W. Franklin was named chairperson of the business computing program and held that position until the fall of 1993 when he became dean of the business and hospitality division. Jaimie E. Mulvey was hired as an instructor in 1982.

The school's program through the years has developed to microprocessor technology, downsizing, from mainframe to minicomputer as the trends in business have changed.

When Mr. Franklin became dean, Carol Mull was named chairperson of the computer technologies department, combining the office technology curriculums and the computer programming curriculums into one department. The computer technology department is currently staffed by seven full-time instructors, nine adjunct/part-time instructors, two lab assistants, and a fluctuating numbers of peer tutors. The new department has seven labs in the Birch Building for use of administrative office technology, general office technology, and non-majors. Laboratory facilities at Craggy Correctional Center and the Ramsey Center on the Madison campus are used by students who are taking courses related to the microcomputer applications and work processing/desktop publishing certificates offered through this department. This program currently serves approximately 2,500 students every year. [Program Overview, Department of Development]

Sara Martin Morris joined the faculty to teach related courses in business in 1963 at "off campus" courses at the former Biltmore High School on Hendersonville Road, which A-B Tech leased. When an executive secretarial program was designed for a program at AB Tech in 1966, Sara became chairperson and did it. Through the years she was determined that every business that hired "her" students would know what kind of job preparation was given at AB Tech. She felt each graduate represented the school and wanted each to demonstrate proficiency, quality, and professionalism. In 1973, she became acting director of the division of business administration; in 1974, she was chairperson of office education.

Sara Martin Morris, 1970.

Sara Morris was dedicated to A-B Tech and wanted it to be the very best it could be for the success of its graduates. She never wavered in her belief that nothing had to stay the same and that everything and everybody could be improved. (This was not always a popular belief since many colleagues felt they were "running as fast" as they could.)

Sara's "kinship" with the college made her take any weakness she saw as personal to the positive image she wanted for the school. She enhanced the image of A-B Tech in the community by her untiring public service after she became Director of Development for the school in 1984. Her job was to oversee public information, publications, planning and researching. She made a positive impression on the community through her community work -- again to try to improve everything. Some of her community activities included being a board member for the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, chairperson of United Way, vice chairperson of the Regional Leadership Development Project, chairperson of Buncombe County Department of Social Services, board member of the I-26 Corridor Association, board member of River Link. She was awarded the Circle of Excellence in 1986 for service to the community and leadership in Asheville. In 1987 she was the recipient of the Mental Health Advocate of the Year award. In 1995, she was named in the Asheville Citizen-Times's tally of Asheville and Buncombe County leaders. When she was chairperson of the United Way, she personally visited many of the agencies that would receive funds. She said an experience she would never forget was going to the abused women's shelter and seeing a bruised-face woman and a scared little boy and girl running for their lives. All their "belongings" were stuffed into two paper bags. Sara helped financially but, more importantly, tried to give people a chance to improve their situations by her work.

Sara never stopped running toward all her goals until, physically, she could not get out of bed because of cancer but still conducted as much business as possible by telephone until shortly before she died on October 14, 1995. She did not think her job here was done and never gave up the belief that she could return to what meant so much to her -- trying to make a difference. Sara had an indomitable spirit that could not give up; she did not go "gently into that good night."

She would be very much pleased if she inspired one person to carry on her determination for a better chance for A-B Tech's various students or for a better community for Western North

Carolina's people. She had "dreams" that she hoped would live on after her death. Fittingly, one of her last community projects was as process manager for the Vision Asheville/Buncombe County Task Force.

After Sara's death the Mayor of Asheville, Russell Martin, sent a resolution in memory of Sara Martin Morris to her family, which included "Whereas, Sara Morris was a shining example of a person who demonstrated how much she cared for her community by her continuous efforts to improve it."

Chemical Technology

The Chemical Technology program was developed for the fall of 1963. Its goal was to train students in the fundamentals of general and organic chemistry so that they could perform qualitative and analytical analyses. Students also would be trained in substances and reactions to learn methods and procedures used in the development of new products.

James E. Anderson was the first chemistry instructor hired. Mr. Anderson was a chemist with eight years of experience in a local industry prior to his employment at the institute. "Instruction is carried out in a laboratory designed for the purpose and supplied with the latest in modern equipment. An advisory committee, composed of local persons employed in the chemical field, assists with selection of equipment and with keeping the equipment geared to current industrial requirements." [Asheville Citizen, March 29, 1964] Mr. Anderson was the department head of chemical technology from 1965 through 1968.

Richard L. Whittington was an instructor in chemistry in 1968. In 1968, Robert E. Morrell was hired and named department chairperson in 1969. Mr. Morrell held this position until his retirement. The chemical technology program was discontinued in

1990. Carolyn May was hired as a chemistry instructor in 1970 and is still employed in that field in teaching the courses for non-majors. Matthew Fender was hired in 1990 and still teaches chemistry. Donald Young, who became an instructor in 1988, is currently chairperson of the chemistry/physics department which is part of the Division of Arts and Sciences. (Perhaps Don's skill in chemistry attributes to his making a perfect clam chowder.)

The School of Industrial Technology

The School of Industrial Technology was developed in 1963 and included mechanical, agriculture, instrumentation, and distributive education programs. The school of industrial technology required each student to demonstrate an ability to "follow an actual production situation from raw material to a finished product." [ABIEC catalog 1963-1964] Agricultural technology was planned for 1964. This one never developed and was "dropped" from the 1964-1965 catalog.

The mechanical technology course included learning the principles of machine design and their applications and designing parts for machines. William A. Dickinson was chairperson of this program in 1969. George Hornaday became the chairperson in 1985. Industrial instrumentation technology was designed to develop instrument technicians who were qualified to solve problems, involving basic design, installation, and maintenance of complicated instruments and automatic control machines. These courses were designed for six quarters.

Distributive education was designed for short courses for professional people already involved in retail, wholesale, and service occupations. Courses included salesmanship, business communications, food service, motel and hotel training, human relations in business.

These three programs continued in 1964-1965 but were changed by 1965 when a school of business developed for the distributive education courses, and the mechanical engineering's being placed in the school of engineering technology along with electronic and a new program, civil engineering.

The Center's administrators were trying to find programs that were needed and wanted for students and the community. This took adaptability which they were prepared for with this new type of education. No "patterns" were in place to follow.

From the beginning of the Industrial Education Center, the administration and the board members made sure that the courses being provided were the ones needed for Western North Carolina. Job surveys were done which showed that employment opportunities did exist in the local area and that employers who had already hired the trained students overall were satisfied. After only one graduating class, graduates were employed by over thirty different businesses and industries. [Asheville Citizen, March 29, 1964]

"Each course offers excellent opportunities for employment upon completion as evidenced by studies conducted by the N. C. Employment Security Commission and the experience of Center graduates." [Asheville Citizen, August 4, 1963]

Related Faculty

The administrators saw a need for students to have a "well-rounded" curricula whatever program of study they pursued. Therefore, "related" faculty members were hired.

In 1962 three mathematics instructors were added at ABIEC: Robert Albee, Donald Burnette, R. K. Deweese. By 1963,

C. A. Johnson was added as a mathematics instructor, and James Waldrop taught other related courses. G. Paul Lentjes was instructor in physical science by 1963, and Sara Morris had been hired to teach business courses then held in the old Biltmore High School building. These instructors were the forerunners of the division of general education. Over the years more and more instructors were added to teach such related courses as English, psychology, social science.

Evaluation of Faculty

An article in the Asheville Citizen, March 25, 1962, stated that not only did the employed instructors have practical experience in their fields, but also were a "rare combination of skilled tradesmen and professional teachers." The sincere interest of the instructors is evidenced by the number of hours of their free time they spend on projects and ideas helpful in the instructional area." Instructors knew that immediate funds were not always available for necessary items. If there were problems with equipment, they conferred and solved the problem themselves.

Harvey Haynes, retired President of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, said that from the beginning AB Tech was "blessed" with excellent instructors.

During the Center's fall quarter in 1962, classes totaling approximately 100,000 contact hours were presided over by a full-time staff of 15 instructors and 72 part-time instructors. [Asheville Citizen, May 24, 1963]

Courses Off Campus

The Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center started as a school all "off" campus before there was a campus to teach at. The courses of interest and need were offered where the people could meet. Perhaps this is, in essence, what a community college stands for. Harvey Haynes stated that, after the two campus buildings were opened in the early 1960s, the administrators felt that only ten percent of the school's courses should be taught "off" campus. He said the demand was just too high to make this figure realistic. This center was to educationally serve all of Western North Carolina in whatever way it could, including offering courses in local high schools and community centers.

The Center tried to offer opportunities to people who had not had their chances at the education they wanted before, whether to learn to read for the first time or to upgrade the skills they already had. This purpose has not changed, and, from the very first, the people came when offered the opportunity. The "off" campus courses grew as they were needed. Lowell Smith, who became the dean of continuing education, said interested people who wanted a special course, whether German language, oil painting, quilting, etc., were told to get ten interested people and that the school would find an instructor and a place for the class to meet.

A real problem arose in 1987 and threatened this overall program when the Cape Fear Technical College and others had created "phantom" extension courses which had no students. The courses were only "on paper" to receive state funds. Many new restrictions were made state-wide, and A-B Tech carefully was scrutinized. However, "the state-wide audit did not find the same problems at AB Tech that it found in other community colleges, Renfrow [state auditor] said, adding that AB Tech is `one of the better schools in the state, as far as attendance is concerned.' He said attendance at A-B Tech's extension courses was six percentage points higher than the average attendance for such courses in community colleges throughout the state." [Asheville Times, July 23, 1987]

Extension Courses in the Asheville Area

After the Center's move to the campus in the spring of 1961, various extension courses started being offered or administered by Asheville-Buncombe County Industrial Education Center.

A power sewing class was taught in the McIntyre Building in Asheville by September of 1961. [Asheville Citizen, August 31, 1961]

Announced in the Asheville Times on December 28, 1962, was a 27-weeks' course in stenography, being administered by ABIEC, starting January 7, 1963. This was a joint project of the school and the N. C. Employment Security Commission office. The course was to be set up under the provisions of the recently enacted National Manpower Development and Training Act (later HRD). The course with thirty students was to be conducted at One Ravenscroft Drive in Asheville with instructors Mrs. Cornelia Jarrett and Mrs. Annie Wilson.

By January 31, 1963, a second course to be administered by the ABIEC was a general woodworking machine course, also approved under the HRD. By May of 1963, over two-thirds of all classes were conducted in facilities away from the campus. [Asheville Citizen, May 24, 1963]

"Off" campus courses varied, but the majority were for "upgrading or updating instruction in whatever miscellaneous subject areas there was sufficient demand for." [Asheville Citizen, May 24, 1963] Plus, any company that needed a group of workers trained could come to the school and have courses set up to give the training. These courses, by 1963, had included labor law for supervisors, industrial communications, effective business letter writing, arc welding, engineering statistics, pharmacology.

Practical Nursing Program

In addition to short varied courses, one program was added "off" campus. The Asheville School of Practical Nursing was started in 1954 under the supervision of the Asheville City Schools in coordination with the State Department of Public Instruction. In 1959, when the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center was created, it became the administrator of this program. The classes continued to be held at the hospitals until 1971 when classroom facilities were available on the campus.

Practical nursing was the first medical program sponsored by AB Tech. Two groups were at St. Joseph's Hospital and one at Memorial Mission Hospital. Ruth Geddings served as the coordinator. Other instructors by 1963 included Ruth Digges and Louise Maney. By 1964, Carole H. Towery was an instructor instead of Mrs. Maney. Joyce Robinson was hired by AB Tech as an instructor with this program at St. Joseph's in September of 1967. Jo Ann Holderman was hired by AB Tech for an instructor at Memorial Mission Hospital.

The practical nursing program was moved into the new Rhododendron Allied Health building upon its completion in 1971 with Ruth Geddings serving as its chairperson until her retirement in 1976. Joyce Robinson and Jo Ann Holderman are still instructors in this program and credit Ruth Geddings with creating a well-designed program that has worked over the years. Brenda D. Causey and Bonnie Sayler were hired as an instructors in 1976.

For years, the nursing instructors also taught the related courses, such as biology, nutrition, health and development. A source of pride to Joyce and Jo Ann is to see their students mature as individuals as they develop competency in the health field. [Interviews, fall 1995]

Memorial Mission Hospital, St Joseph's, and Greentree Ridge are currently the contracted clinical agencies for this program. From the years 1954 through 1995, one thousand two hundred and thirty-one students have been graduated from this program. The graduates of the one-year program receive a diploma and are prepared to take the National Council Licensure Examination.

Ruth Geddings, 1975.

Extensions in Other Counties

In its beginning, the Center was responsible for extension courses in 15 counties of Western North Carolina. Four extension units, or satellite schools were set up in 1963: Tri-County in Murphy, Haywood County, Southwestern in Jackson County, and McDowell County. J. B. Edwards said this was a great challenge after the State Board told them to go set these up. He pointed out that in 1967, AB Tech's administrators decided its school should become accredited by the Southern Association for an aid to its students. However, if a school had "satellite" schools, all schools had to become accredited for one to be. The new schools were not yet ready to try, so they became independent from AB Tech. Over the years as more technical schools were developed, AB Tech was left only to serve Buncombe and Madison Counties.

Progress of Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center, 1959-1963

Often state governments and congressmen are given no credit for being able to foresee a need and to meet it. However, in the case of realizing their high school graduates who could not attend regular colleges for various reasons and adults who had never finished high school for various reasons needed a chance for additional educational training, the congressmen did start a difference by supporting industrial education centers throughout North Carolina.

The community leaders had to gather support for this new type of education. The local citizens agreed by voting to support a different type of education in Western North Carolina. The City of Asheville School Board gave an excellent site for a campus on Victoria Road, one that offered room for growth, and picked responsible and highly capable employees. Industrial and educational leaders donated their advice and time to ensure worthwhile programs that could be adapted to meet current needs. The ones who wanted more education started quickly taking advantage of this new opportunity.

Before the 1961-62 school year was complete the Asheville Citizen's article, "Industrial Education Courses in Demand," March 25, 1962, stated that the Industrial Education Center was "a silent partner in the economic growth and development of our area and is constantly striving to find more and better ways to serve our people." The article added that the school was a "far cry from the stereotype trade school" since it was modern and well equipped in every respect to do the training job required of it with instructors who had practical experience in their fields.

In April of 1962, speaking at the dedication luncheon of the year-old Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center, Governor Terry Sanford said that the center was a "tribute to the progressive spirit of the people of this section of the state." He cited that rapid advances in technology forced the development of technical training. He also added that the full development of the citizens who attended these centers needed "a broad foundation of general education" in their training. Governor Sanford felt that "in the development of our total system of education, the public school, the institutions between the high school and higher education will all fit into a total pattern. Such a pattern of educational opportunity is in many respects, a dream that can and must come true. All of us must work together in demonstrating such a spirit here in Asheville." [Bruce Gourlay, "New Institutions Needed To Meet Changing Times," Asheville Citizen, April 28, 1962]

From 1959 until 1962, what some people thought of as just a small industrial center had achieved unreal success, so much success in a short period of time that many people felt it already had reached its potential. However, Thomas Simpson, the director, and his staff knew they had just started. More plans were being made. More students with varying needs and interests would be served.

From 1959, the Center had been governed by the Asheville City School Board; however, in the 1963 General Assembly, the state's industrial education programs were placed under the newly developed Department of Community Colleges. The Centers themselves would have a board of trustees. In 1963, State Representative Gordon H. Greenwood, chairman of the higher education committee, was approached by the speaker of the house,

H. Clifton Blue, and asked to lead a campaign to get passed what would become the Higher Education Act of 1963. "That bill was probably the most important thing I've done . . .. It was not easy, but it's one of the most fantastic things and one of the most tremendous success stories we've ever had in our state." [Asheville Citizen-Times, September 16, 1984]

In October of 1963, a board of trustees was developed for the Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center. These board members were Dr. Lester Zerfoss, chairman; J. Gerald Cowan, vice-chairman; Coke Candler; John M. Barnes; Herbert Coman; John Reynolds; Joseph E. Belton; W. W. Shope; Thomas Simpson, IEC director and board secretary.

Board of Trustees, Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center

This newly created board passed a resolution in their first meeting seeking to upgrade the Center's status to that of a technical institute. The new status would not change the programs already taught, but the name would be changed to Asheville-Buncombe County Technical Institute and, more importantly, the school could award the Associate in Applied Science degree and be able to receive state funds for capital improvements in some years. The Center was already offering five technical programs (more than any other industrial education center). This center also had the largest enrollment of any of the twenty industrial centers in North Carolina.

Before this name change would be granted by the State Board of Education, the center seeking the technical institute designation would have to prove that it met a need that existing public and private post-high school institutions in the area were not meeting and that adequate financial support for the institute would be provided.

During the final months of 1963, the Asheville-Buncombe County Industrial Education Center was undergoing evaluating procedures to be named a technical institute.

Chapter 3

ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE NEW NAME, NEW DEVELOPMENTS

On January 9, 1964, a major milestone in the history of the former Asheville-Buncombe County Industrial Education Center was made when the school officially was approved by the Department of Community Colleges to become Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute. [Asheville Citizen, March 29, 1964]

By 1964, Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center had served the people of Western North Carolina by providing technical and trade education and was providing trained people for the growing industrial complex of the region. However, it was a mutual happening. Trained students from the school helped industry to come into the area because industry could be assured that trained workers were available. So that industries that were considering the Asheville area would know about the training help available, Tom Simpson, president of the newly named Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute, and Harvey Haynes, dean of instruction worked to entice new industries. Mr. Simpson and Mr. Haynes let others, through such agencies as the Chamber of Commerce and the "Faculty Locating Service," know industries contemplating a move could get help from AB Tech. [Harvey Haynes, Personal Interview]

The years from 1964 through 1969 were ones of general growth; many valuable employees were hired.

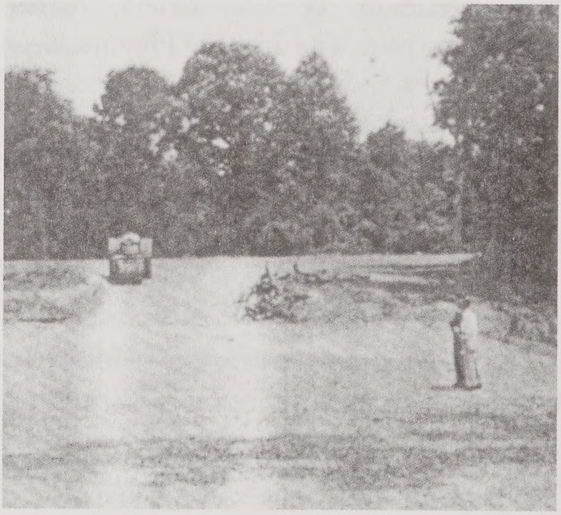
With the success of the programs while the school was ABIEC, more and more students became interested in attending. More buildings were needed to develop successful curricular programs.

Buildings and Land Acquisitions

Buildings

At the first meeting in January of 1964, the board of trustees approved a five-year operating plan which called for $250,000 in new building construction for the next eighteen months. [Asheville Citizen, January 21, 1964] The third building "C" (later named Dogwood) on the campus was under construction and to open for classes for fall of 1964.

"C" building would help relieve overcrowding in the other two buildings and included five classrooms and shops for welding, air-conditioning refrigeration, farm machinery and heavy equipment, physics laboratory, a school for carpenters and cabinet makers and one undesignated shop for training workers for industrial expansion or new industry. Transferral of the welding and air conditioning shops made room for the tool and dye curriculum to be started in "B" building. (This was later named Maple.) [Asheville Citizen, January 26, 1964]



"C" Building in 1963

Maple and Dogwood buildings were remodeled in 1991, becoming one building named Dogwood.

The administrative staff was always looking ahead, never content to think that enough had been done for development of this Institute's potential. By July 1964, plans for a fourth building at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute were being planned. The Institute's board of trustees approved application for $500,000. Buncombe County had invested $512,000 in the previous three buildings on the Victoria Road campus; therefore, a possibility existed that a "like amount" could be obtained from the State -- or possibly federal funds. The detailed plans for the expansion were started.

By 1966, about seventy-five percent of the classes administered by Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute were held "off campus" because the facilities could not hold 8,000 plus students. Bruce Gourley wrote in the Asheville-Times on August 8, 1966, that a $712,000 structure would be paid for with $356,000 in Vocational Educational Act fund, $212,000 in Appalachian Redevelopment Funds, and $144,000 in state funds. The new "D" (later Birch) building would provide adequate space for existing programs, such as the business courses held at the old Biltmore School and house the 14 motel rooms and a food service area to train chefs, hotel-motel managers, and the supplementary personnel for the tourist industry. North Carolina's Governor Dan Moore announced from Raleigh that this motel with kitchen and restaurant to be used for schooling would be the first of its kind in the nation. [Asheville Times, April 28, 1966]

Everyone who was on campus in the mid-1960s remembered the bulldozer that the state had as mechanical surplus and delivered to Asheville-Buncombe Tech on a flat bed truck. The ramps were put into place to drive the bulldozer off, but the bulldozer would not start. The staff wanted this bulldozer to use for grading for the fourth building. The bulldozer would enable staff to level the hill on the site and push the dirt into a gully to build a new parking lot. Two faculty members, Ron Sluder and Jim Rhea, had already timbered the needed property.

Everyone conferred beside "C" building, looking at the needed bulldozer and being afraid the state driver of the flat bed would just take the bulldozer back. They came up with an idea. They tied ropes securely from the bulldozer to a large oak tree and told the driver to just proceed out from under it. He did, and the bulldozer bounced down. The bulldozer survived the ordeal, and after much work on it, Robert Israel managed to get it and keep it running for much needed work. All the faculty and the staff members took their turns at operating it to tear down the tremendous hill where Birch Building now sits.

No one mentioned whether this was a required "after school" activity or just fun. This could have been like when Mr. Simpson had told quite a few of the employees, including Lowell Smith, Stans Sluder, Ron Sluder, John Woody, Bob Parker, to wear or bring old clothes the next day. No one asked why. They just brought the old clothes for "whatever." Mr. Simpson told them later the next day that the storage building needed a new roof. It was a very hot day, but they persevered until the roof was completed. Lowell Smith said he then put in his office a drawing of this man who looked a wreck -- bloodshot eyes, filthy clothes half-torn off, stubby beard, sweaty and greasy hair. The caption under the drawing said, "Thar's a hell of a lot they didn't tell me when I hired on with this outfit."

Olin Wood, who also remembered the famous bulldozer, said about those years, "If there was a problem, we got together and decided what could be done. If something was broken, we fixed it." No one remembered specific job descriptions. Everyone wanted the school to succeed and did his or her best in trying to help. [Interviews, Fall 1995]

The two-story, fourth building was completed for the fall classes to begin in 1968. The main floor of "D"/Birch building included the 14 motel rooms, a classroom kitchen with $100,000 worth of modern kitchen equipment, classrooms, data processing department, and the school's library. This facility was the first "planned" library space for an instructional program and contained 2,300 square feet.

The upstairs housed the business administration programs plus some classrooms and office spaces to share with part of the "related" faculty members in English, sociology, and psychology.

Land Acquisitions

Three small, but important, property acquisitions took place between 1965 and 1969. On January 26, 1965, the Hooper property was purchased which included a house used for a few years and known as the "Green House." (This property is the current outpatient parking lot for the Rhododendron Allied Health Building.) On October 25, 1965, the adjoining Johnson property was purchased and has now become a graveled parking lot. On February 3, 1969, Faith Cottage was purchased. This is the current site where the Simpson Administration Building stands.

Students

The interest of students in attending programs on the campus and taking extension courses "off campus" caused AB Tech to grow at an unbelievable rate.

In the 1963-1964 school years, student enrollment had doubled over the 1962-1963 year. In "on and off" campus courses, there were 5,195 students. [Asheville Citizen, July 28, 1964] For the fall 1964 classes, in the trade and technical "on" campus courses, 611 students from fourteen counties enrolled. [Asheville

Citizen-Times, September 13, 1964] On August 23, 1964, graduates receiving state diplomas or associate in applied science degrees totaled 145. This graduation was held at Lee Edwards High School.

By October of 1965, students in all divisions numbered 6,009. On August 8, 1966, Bruce Gourlay's article in the Asheville Times was titled, "AB Tech Serves 8,000 Students During a Year." The majority of these students were part-time, enrolled in adult education classes, special skills and interest classes, and industrial training. The 1967 fall enrollment of 735 made AB Tech's number greater that 37 colleges and universities in North Carolina. Thomas Simpson stated, "Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute is larger than 16 senior colleges, 11 junior colleges, and 10 community colleges in our state -- and this in the seventh year of operation." There were 10,308 students taking general extension courses through AB Tech by 1967. [Asheville Times, November 14, 1968]

Mr. Simpson continued that growth was shown in subtle ways also. "The electrical bill has grown to a monthly total of $1,000, the custodial staff to seven, an annual heating bill of $5,268, and a need for expanded parking to accommodate 750 cars." [Asheville Times, November 14, 1968] One reason for this high electric bill may have been that for quite some time after "D"/Birch building was opened in 1968, hot water was used, mistakenly, to flush the commodes. Fixing an original plumbing problem saved money.

The fall enrollment by 1968 had grown to 819 students on the Victoria Road campus.

Administrators and Staff

Many people who were hired between 1964 and 1969 changed title positions several times; a few left; some retired years later; some are still serving Asheville-Buncombe Tech. These are among the ones who have seen the changes over the years.

Dr. Olin Wood, currently vice-president of instructional services, was hired in July of 1964 as a mathematics and data processing instructor. In 1975, he became director of business education. Olin remembered when there was the one copier on the campus. He also remembered the one computer when now there are 700 computers plus a large main frame.

Thomas E. Gaffigan, currently dean of arts and sciences, was hired in 1965 as a mathematics instructor.

Richard Croom, currently the dean of the Madison County campus, was hired on August 1, 1966, as a civil engineer instructor.

K. Ray Bailey, currently the President of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, was hired on August l, 1966, as director of adult basic education. In 1969, he became the business manager, and later vice-president of fiscal affairs and vice-president of administrative services before he became President in July 1990.

Carolyn C. Hadaway, currently purchasing agent in the office of administrative services, was hired as a secretary in 1967. Carolyn, for many years, was the one responsible for doing inventory on the pieces of equipment on the school's campus. She always seemed prepared, dutifully recording her figures, even when she found rodent carcasses on the shelves of some of the no longer used equipment. The exact location of State equipment had to be accounted for.

Jo Ann Ray Crompton was hired July 10, 1968, by Mr. Haynes as a secretary for instructors, answering the campus telephone, and being a book store clerk. Jo Ann's being hired as an employee at AB Tech was not her first experience with the school. She was a graduate of its executive secretarial program and remembered it as excellent with instructors Sara Morris, Jewell McDaniel, James Hurley, Al Freeman, and Ron Sluder.

Jo Ann felt one difference she had seen at AB Tech, in addition to its outstanding growth, was the changes in students. She recalled when Mrs. Morris in their shorthand class had written on the board "hor" in shorthand symbols and became irritated when no one in the class could identify the word. Jo Ann said no one would dare say the word out loud in class. When Mrs. Morris looked back at the board, she quickly added the "s" in shorthand and said, "You knew I meant horse." Nobody laughed.

With the growth in numbers of staff employees, Jo Ann feels the close camaraderie became lost. She said she would never forget the first year she was employed, all the secretarial staff on a day off went on a picnic to Chimney Rock. The group included Carolyn Hadaway, Jane Smith, Jessie Goforth, Helen Bowers, Pat Farr. She felt that she had found the right job.

Jo Ann feels her employment growth has been very positive at AB Tech. She became J. B. Edwards' secretary when he was director of personnel. Later she was secretary for Dr. Wood and Harvey Haynes. When Mr. Bailey was named President in July of 1990, she became and is currently his secretary and secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Ivory Hunter was hired in maintenance in 1967 and became an indispensable part of A-B Tech's staff. Ivory could be counted upon to do requested "extra" jobs, including becoming the school's unofficial chaplain. Ivory retired as coordinator of maintenance operations on January l, 1996.

Student Services

In 1964, Jack Davis's title had been changed from associate director to the director of student personnel. In addition, A. Thomas (Tom) Hansen had been hired in 1966 as the first full-time counselor. Tom served the students with understanding and helpful guidance until his retirement.

Mary Louise Carpenter was hired in 1969 as a counselor and has seen many changes at the school as well as thousands of students. She is one who has stayed and is currently vice-president of student services.

Librarians

The first librarian, May Manning, was hired in 1964 when the library was in Room A-3, present Azalea Building, with 682 square feet. Bruce Arrowood, the first professional librarian, was hired in 1965. When the move to the newly opened Birch Building was made, Mr. Arrowood resigned, and Katie Davis was acting librarian until the current director Shirley B. McLaughlin was hired as head librarian in 1969. The collection in the library had grown to about 6,500 volumes by 1969. Shirley is another one who has stayed and seen tremendous growth in what was once "just" a bunch of books to complete library services. She is currently the director of the Learning Resources Center.

Extension Services

The biggest expansion of administrators developed with the growth in the number of students in non-curricular/continuing education services. The scope of the number of extension courses grew. The extension division offered adults a chance to upgrade, update, or generally add to their knowledge or job performance. In this division of extension courses, AB Tech still served many counties that had not developed institutes of their own; therefore, area consultants were needed. For example, "The trustees approved an agreement with the Jackson County Board of Commissioners and Board of Education under which the Asheville-Buncombe Institute will be responsible for the supervision and administration of the program in a new industrial education center now under construction near Sylva. A similar agreement with Haywood County officials for supervision of a training program for practical nurses was also approved." [Asheville Citizen, July 28, 1964] Plus, more basic programs were growing in Western North Carolina.

The courses in the non-curricular education were divided into four subdivisions: the adult basic courses, the general adult education, the extension education, the learning laboratory. In 1964, J. B. Edwards, Jr., was director of extension until 1967 when he became business manager. James R. Cox was director of general adult and community service until 1965 when James R. Winning took this position. (In 1969, Mr. Winning became division director of the allied health and Mr. Cox became director of the hotel/restaurant.)

In 1965 Tyrus West and Norris H. Bell were coordinators for extension areas. O'Brien Brooks had been hired to supervise the adult basic education in 1966. In 1967, Jay Canter was director of general adult education.

Tyrus West became the assistant director of extension in 1968 and the dean of continuing education in 1969. Norris H. Bell, through 1968, was area coordinator supervisor of development training. K. Ray Bailey was the director of adult basic with Ray Sawyer as assistant director. "A total of 641 of these classes were held in a number of miscellaneous subject areas, such as adult basic education, fire service training, high school equivalency, health occupations, supervisory development training, etc. One of the most novel of these, Simpson noted, was a class for laryngostomies, designed to help those who have had their larynx removed to learn to speak again. Sixteen persons enrolled in this course." [Asheville Times, November 14, 1968]

By 1969, Ray Sawyer was the director of adult basic. Lowell

Smith, previously hired as a mathematics instructor in 1965, became the coordinator of the learning laboratory. Area consultants by 1969 were Jay Canter, previously hired as a business instructor in 1966, for travel and tourist, and John D. Lane, previously hired as a "related" instructor in 1964 and chairperson of mechanical engineering technology in 1965, supervisor of development training.

Adult Basic Education

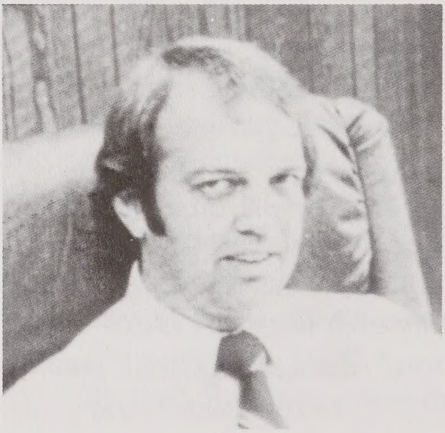
Adult basic education provides training in primary and elementary education for non-readers through grade 8. It is designed to take the adult from whatever level he has attained up through the eighth grade, providing him with the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. This program was started at AB Tech in 1964 with courses in 14 counties of Western North Carolina.

"The 1960 census revealed many startling things. None caused more concern to local education than the revelation that there were 42,761 adults above the age of 25 in Buncombe, Madison, Henderson, Transylvania, and Yancey counties who had not completed the eighth grade. Statewide figures were just as alarming. Forty-one percent of the state's 2,307,171 adults over 25 had not finished the eighth grade and another 26 percent had gone above the eighth grade but hadn't completed high school. Thus, only one-third of all Tar Heels over 24 had as much as a high school education.

"According to Ray E. Sawyer of Asheville, director of Adult Basic Education at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute, these figures may be upgraded because of the concerted attacks made upon illiteracy during the sixties by such institutes as AB Tech." [Bob Terrell, "Adult Basic Education," Asheville Citizen, January 11, 1970]

Mr. Bailey, early director of adult basic education, said he had never been so overwhelmed as when the adult basic education program started in area high schools and one was publicized, mainly by students' taking home brochures, to be held at Charles D. Owen High School in 1967. The meeting was to be held in the school's cafeteria, and he said he had hoped for twenty or so adults wanting to learn to read. About two hundred and fifty attended, packing the place; plus, one man came in and said he had a disabled person in a wheel chair who had asked him to bring him, but they couldn't get down the stairs to the cafeteria. The principal at Owen, at that time, Charles Lytle, went to the car and carried him into the meeting. The students were then tested to see what kind of help they needed, and classes were formed in the local community to meet their needs.

As with many others, K. Ray Bailey had done part-time work for AB Tech before being hired as a full-time employee. As one person interviewed said, "He was someone who always seemed to like the atmosphere or something about this place since he was over here very much in the small library -- doing something." The "something" he was doing was setting up an audio-visual program similar to the one he had organized at Erwin High School where he had been teaching for three years.



K. Ray Bailey,
One who Obtained Many Titles.

When Mr. Simpson asked him if he would like a job at the school, Ray asked, "Doing what?" He became the director of the adult basic education on August 1, 1966.

In March of 1967, AB Tech staff was elated when Lady Bird Johnson was going to visit fifteen adult basic education classes, including ones at Lee Edwards High School. Ray said he and his staff even practiced how they would walk up the stairs with Mrs. Johnson. They were not to touch her but be ready to steady her if she stumbled.

Bernard Smith, who was teaching mathematics in the adult basic part-time for AB Tech but a regular physics teacher at Lee Edwards High School, remembered going into his regular physics lab where he taught the math course that Mrs. Johnson would briefly visit. He said the room had been cleared of all the physics equipment and full of secret service men running around. The only thing the men said to him was to asked how to open all the windows. He explained that most of the old double-hung windows couldn't be opened because the weighted cords were broken. Ignoring Bernard, one man threw up a window which immediately crashed down, shattering broken glass all over the room. However, Mrs. Johnson must have been impressed since the programs did not lose federal funding.

Ray Bailey became the area coordinator of supervisory development training on June 1, 1968. In the fall of 1968, Ray Bailey was working in the "Green House" and probably wondering how that old Volkswagon "bug" of his could keep making trips to all of Western North Carolina checking on progress and instructors of the area programs when he received a call that Mr. Simpson wanted to see him. Ray said when Mr. Simpson wanted to see somebody, he or she ran as quickly as possible. He sprinted up to "A" building, and Tom Simpson told him that the school needed a business manager. Ray said he was delighted he'd done nothing wrong and that Mr. Simpson wanted his advice on hiring someone.

He told Mr. Simpson he couldn't think of anyone for the job right then and was amazed when Mr. Simpson asked if he'd try it.

Ray Bailey became business manager, a strictly "pen and ink" job in the days before computer programs. He served as vice president of fiscal services and vice president of administrative services until July of 1990.

General Adult Education

General adult education courses vary. Some provide a continuation of the adult basic program at the high school level, including preparation for the high school equivalency examination (GED).

When a student passes the GED, he is awarded the High School Equivalency Certificate, recognized and accepted almost without exception by industry, agencies of the government, employers, colleges, as the legal equivalent of a diploma from an accredited high school. In addition, courses are offered which are designed to promote avocational, personal improvement, and cultural interests of the adult preparation. [Asheville Citizen, January 11, 1970]

Extension Education

The extension education was and is varied, including training in trade, industrial, business, and service occupations to upgrade and retrain workers. Also in this subdivision was included pre-employment training from the Manpower Development and Training Act.

The extension offers "a program that is both practical and flexible, and it has met with phenomenal success. The training offered, as widely varied as are the needs of Western North Carolina people, has been extended literally to thousands, whose economic status has been improved as a result. It has been a mainstay of industrial development in Western North Carolina. New firms coming into the area and old ones planning expansion have used it for training personnel, from apprentices to the management level. Scope of the industrial training program ranges from one course to fill a particular need in a particular industry to long range programs worked out in conjunction with an industry's training department." [Mary Cowles, Asheville Citizen-Times, January 29, 1967]

When a major industry was seeking a new plant location site, the administrators would tell its representatives that by the time they had their plant built, the personnel could be trained for their specific requirements. Arrangements also could be made so that the training could be accomplished through the use of the firm's own specialized equipment. These special short-term courses were called new industry training and were funded by the State of North Carolina.

An example of this type of arrangement was made when Taylor Instrument was considering the Asheville area as a site location. The director of its personnel, Joe McManus, while doing a survey for the firm, visited the institute's facilities and was impressed. Mr. Simpson and Mr. Haynes agreed to go to Rochester, N. Y., to look at Taylor's operation to see if the Institute could handle the personnel training.

Mr. McManus stated that when he returned to the school in April of 1964 to coordinate programs, he found these administrators very helpful and made arrangements to ship the specialized equipment to the school. The school supplied the space and the students and put one of the company's supervisors on its payroll as the instructor. "They conducted sewing, general assembly of blood pressure instruments and barometers, a program in glass blowing." He also stated that Taylor hired 75 to 80 percent of the Institute's 1964 secretarial class graduates. [Asheville Citizen, October 3, 1965]

These programs were not limited to industry. Business courses had been offered such as courses for real estate appraisers, advanced income tax training for accountants interested in changes in the internal revenue laws, public speaking classes for business men. "Success of the program, according to James R. Winning, director, stems from several factors. `For one thing, we aren't selling the people anything nor giving them a handout. We simply offer them the opportunity to do something for themselves and the facilities with which to do it.'" [Asheville Citizen-Times, January 29, 1967]

Under the Manpower Development and Training Act such courses as brickmasonry and training of trellis tomato workers were offered, with a variety of new courses being planned.

Learning Laboratory

The learning laboratory provided opportunities for supervised self-study in order to strengthen educational backgrounds for students who were enrolled or wanted to enroll in a curriculum course.

Lowell Smith, who was hired to teach mathematics on August l, 1965, became the first learning lab coordinator in 1968. Katie C. Davis replaced Lowell as coordinator of the learning laboratory in 1969, a position she held until her retirement.

Lowell became director of extension in the spring of 1969. Counties included in the extension division in addition to Buncombe at this time were Madison, Henderson, and Transylvania. When Mr. Simpson asked him to take the job, he said he didn't pay much attention at the time to Mr. Simpson's adding, "But you'll be a fool if you do." There were times later he thought about it. Lowell hired qualified instructors and developed well-planned and successful courses that benefited individuals and the communities.

In 1965, Lowell was a mathematics teacher at T. C. Roberson High School when he saw an advertisement in the newspaper for a mathematics teacher at AB Tech. When he answered the ad and, subsequently, was offered the job, he was not sure he should take it. He knew the school was new and may not succeed. He talked with his principal, Guy Ensley, who told Lowell that he thought the school would be a great success. Lowell never regretted his move. He never even regretted his move to continuing education and was glad that he was offered this challenge.

Lowell Smith became dean of continuing education before his retirement on August 1, 1994. [Interview, fall 1995]

Lowell Smith, 1970.

On-Campus Educational Programs and Faculty

With the approval by the State Board of Education and the State Department of Community Colleges in January of 1964, the newly named Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute became qualified to grant the associate in applied science degree to students successfully completing a two-year technician's program. No areas of curriculum would be discontinued, but some would be added

[Asheville Citizen, January 21, 1964] Full approval by the state board was given for associate degrees in data processing (moved to business division), electronic technology (engineering), and chemical technology (industrial). Mr. Simpson stated that mechanical technology (industrial) and drafting and design production (industrial) were possibilities for an associate degree program as soon as the third building was completed in the fall of 1964. [Asheville Citizen-Times, March 22, 1964]

Six new curricular programs were created between 1964 and 1969. Also, internal restructuring was done by the fall of 1969, dividing the programs into six divisions: vocational-industrial education, engineering technology, business education, hotel-motel and food service, medical-dental and allied health education, general education.

Tom Gaffigan, current dean of arts and sciences, felt that the new internal divisions were made to divide the responsibility for scheduling classes and classrooms as the school grew. Harvey Haynes, as dean of instruction, had been responsible for all this scheduling.

Division of Vocational-Industrial Education

The previous school of trades had two new programs, carpentry and tool and die, by the fall of 1964 when the third building was completed.

By 1963, the national Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) had been passed, and a course in general woodworking had been offered and administered by the ABIC "off campus." When the third building was completed for the fall of 1964 on the Victoria Road campus, this type of program seemed feasible for AB Tech.

For 1964, a new vocational program had been created: carpentry and cabinetmaking. John W. Woody was hired at this time to be chairperson. Mr. Woody's expertise enabled him to establish a program that grew steadily in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Leslie F. Walker was hired in 1969 as a part-time evening instructor and became a full-time instructor in 1976. When Mr. Woody retired, Leslie became the department chairperson on September 1, 1977. Nolan B. Darnell was hired as a full-time instructor at that time. From 1986-1989, Gail Britt was a part-time evening instructor.

Leslie Walker continues to serve as chairperson and assisted by Nolan B. Darnell, instructor in drafting and design engineering technology and residential carpentry.

"In the early years, the carpentry and cabinetmaking curriculum tried placing students with builders in the area during their last quarter to provide them with hands-on experience before graduation. This type of co-oping was not successful because many builders failed to give students the opportunity to practice what they had studied during the previous three quarters. When Leslie Walker became chairperson, he had two long-range goals: to provide a working environment for students during their final quarter that would be comparable to the demands placed on building-industry employees and to personally supervise this experience and to bring the night program into alignment with the day program, that is, to give night students the same amount and quality of training received by day students.

"Mr. Walker started to realize these dreams in the early 1970s when his students built a complete house for the Home Builders Association of North Carolina. Over the next few years, the students, in cooperation with this association built a total of fifteen houses under his supervision.

"When this experience was no longer available, the students spent the summer months working on a variety of building projects for the community, including a house for `Caring for Children,' a community center for a local church, petting areas for the Western

North Carolina Nature Center. In the late 1980s, the department started building houses for Habitat for Humanity.

"In the 1980s, improved energy efficiency became an important issue in residential construction, and in the building industry in general. The curriculum was modified to include the more stringent standards. New products are analyzed and their effectiveness evaluated." [Program Overview, Department of Development]

In 1995, these students built a platform to protect the roots of the ancient beech tree which Pinchot supposedly planted.

Tool and Die making was also established in 1964. Albert W. Awald was the chairperson hired in 1964 to set up the program. Since Mr. Awald's retirement in 1978, Clarence F. Allison has been the instructor. The curriculum was designed to prepare the machinist graduate for the machining of tools and dies for the mass production of parts.

"The emphasis in industry over the years has somewhat shifted from die making to mold making and also toward computer numerical control (CNC) machining equipment. Therefore, beginning with the 1981-82 school year, strength of materials was dropped from the curriculum to add another quarter of mold making called fundamentals of mold construction. The department also purchases a CNC Wirecut Electrical Discharge Machine (EDM) in 1985.

"The curriculum has been very influential in establishing industry in the Western North Carolina area and is continuing to meet the demand for skilled toolmakers.

"To enter the tool and die curriculum, the student must be a machine shop graduate or able to demonstrate journeyman level machinist skills. The tool, die, and mold making program is taught on a level consistent and, in many ways, beyond the level of requirement for the associate degree, although the tool, die and mold making program awards only a technical diploma." One example of the stringent requirements is that these students are the only ones who take the compound angle math course. [Program Overview, Department of Development] This program is currently tool, die, and mold making and in the engineering and applied technology division.

Division of Engineering Technology

Programs developed in the school of engineering and technology during 1964-1969 were civil engineering technology in 1966 and industrial management in 1968 (replacing mechanical engineering from 1968 to 1971).

A civil technology program was in the planning stages in 1965. The 18-month civil technology course's objective was to train technicians in performing the various functions included in the broad field of construction. An advisory committee for this civil technology program had been selected from people who were employed in the field. Jack Davis, institute director of student personnel, stated, "These committees are deemed an invaluable asset in keeping the programs directed toward the actual needs of a person for employment in his chosen field." [Asheville Citizen, March 19, 1965]

Civil engineering technology was developed as a program in 1966. Richard D. Croom was hired on August l, 1966, and became the chairperson of this program. Mr. Croom said when he first talked with Harvey Haynes about teaching in civil engineering, he asked, "Teaching what?" He said the breadth of the field was enormous. A "whole lot" was what he found out since the courses included surveying, strength of materials, construction methods and equipment, properties of soils, construction of roads and pavements, steel and timber construction and others. Mr. Croom became director of the division of engineering technology in 1970. Robert W. Stevens was hired as an instructor in civil engineering in

1969. In 1970, Kenneth W. Driver became chairperson of civil engineering.

Over the years on the campus of AB Tech, faculty and staff who did not know much about civil engineering knew about Richard Croom from his excellent drawings, particularly the ones he did of faculty members upon their retirements. When one faculty member was asked why she was retiring, another faculty member answered, "She really did not want to; she just wanted to make sure she got an `original Croom.'"

Richard Croom has always been a multi-talented person who continued as director of engineering technology until the opening of the Madison County campus of which he is dean.

Richard Croom, 1970.

Croom and Driver both remembered when the campus was "young" without recreational facilities and they set up a basketball goal beside "C" (Dogwood) building. Students, staff, and faculty members just had spontaneous games in their free times. Croom said Ken Driver got too intense and rough and had to be "banned"; of course, Driver did not remember this, but Croom said he had "evidence."

Outside basketball was not an easy sport in 1970.

Ken Driver continues as chairperson of the civil engineering and surveying technology.

In 1969, mechanical engineering technology was started to train engineering technicians to develop and test machinery and equipment under the direction of the engineering staff and physical scientists in industries. William A. Dickinson was employed in 1969 and became the chairperson. By 1970, the industrial engineering had been incorporated into the mechanical engineering curriculum.

Division of Business Education

When the school of business education was created for the fall of 1965, data processing, which had been taught in the engineering technology school, was included. The executive secretarial program, which started in 1966 partially had been taught as extension courses in stenography at Ravencroft Drive in Asheville under the direction of AB Tech but funded under the federal Manpower Development and Training Act. These extension courses were 27 weeks and not as complete as the two year program later developed which could lead to an associate of science degree upon successful completion.

There was not room for the complete business program on campus when it was started; therefore, some courses, such as data processing, were taught on campus, but the Biltmore School, which had been leased by the school, was also used until the fourth building, "D"/Birch, was completed in the fall of 1968. In 1963, Sara Morris taught at the Biltmore School extension, joined by James Hurley and Jewell McDaniel in 1965. The executive secretarial program was first offered as a curriculum in the 1966-67 college catalog. This was later called office education. Sara Morris was the chairperson of this department from its beginning until

1976. She based the teaching of office skills on individualized instruction for students so that they could be given time to master job-level skills regardless of the time the students needed.

More business courses started being taught on the campus in 1965. Richard White was one of the first instructors. Ronald Sluder, who still teaches in the business education programs, was hired in 1965. Ron probably has a record at A-B Tech that no one will ever compare to. In 1995, he had not missed one teaching day in his thirty years. W. C. Mauldin was department chairperson before James Hurley became chairperson in 1966. (Mr. Hurley later taught English in the general education division.) Jay Canter taught business courses in 1966 but in 1967 became the director of general adult education. Albert A. Freeman became an instructor in business education in 1966 and is still an instructor. Donald J. Robinson also joined the AB Tech staff in 1966 and taught physical science as well. He became the chairperson of business administration by 1969.

When the divisions were established, Olin Wood became the first director of business education. The first programs in this division were electronic data processing, secretarial science, business administration. Many changes took place in this rapidly growing division in the next few years.

Division of Hotel-Motel and Food Service Education

A program in hotel-restaurant training was being considered as early as October 1965. "Looking toward a full-time school to offer training in all aspects of hotel-motel operation and catering to the needs of tourists, the Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute is offering a 20-hour course in front office procedure. The course will be cosponsored by the American Hotel-Motel Association." [Asheville Citizen, October 24, 1965] This course along with cook schools would be held "off campus" because of the lack of facilities on the Victoria Road campus. J. R. Cox, who was the area coordinator of travel-tourist training at AB Tech said that a series of about ten courses were planned, including executive housekeeping, accounting, food purchasing, housekeeping, tourist information. Previously, there had been no formal training for personnel employed in the tourist industry in Western North Carolina, even though at this time tourism with the third-largest business in North Carolina. Hotel-motel food service administration and culinary science curricula were first offered at AB Tech in the 1967-68 catalog. The hotel-motel curriculum was developed, including food service operation and supervised work experience, to train students in all aspects of the travel industry. Since food service was included, the curriculum of culinary science was closely connected with it from the beginning.

Ann Maxwell Cooley taught some of the first courses on campus in 1966. She was provided with a gas stove in "C" (Dogwood) Building. (The area she taught courses in later became the snack bar before its move to Azalea and then into the student center in 1992.) The area was amidst the welding, diesel, and air-conditioning facilities. Ms. Cooley had trained at Ecole Le Cordon Bleu in Paris, France. She taught in the program at A-B Tech through 1975.

In the fall of 1968, when "D" (Birch) building was completed, the curricula included a two-year associate degree program in the hotel-motel management and in the food service administration. Also, a number of short courses would be offered, such as refresher training courses for employees already working in the travel and accommodations industry.

Frederick "Rick" Johnsson was hired August l, 1968, to be chairperson of the hotel-motel-restaurant management department. Rick was the former manager of Horne's Restaurant in Lumberton, N. C., and had received a B. S. degree from Florida State University. Rick was also a professional magician who had performed worldwide.

When the programs were restructured into divisions in 1969, hospitality education was removed from the business school, and James R. Cox was the division director. By the fall of 1970, Mr. Johnsson was the division director with Robert Phelps chairperson of hotel-motel food service. Mr. Phelps was with the school only a year before John L. Bolhuis became the chairperson in 1971.

Rick Johnsson served as division director of the hotel-restaurant division until his death in February of 1989. While working for AB Tech, he was involved in numerous consulting jobs and helping to establish several restaurants in the Asheville area. [Asheville Times, February 28, 1989]

Chef Werth felt that Rick was superb at dining room atmosphere and strength in management skills. He stated that Rick was brilliant with an unbelievable memory. Chef said they were opposites in personalities but "blended" together for the students. [Interview, Fall 1995]

Bob Werth, a native of France, had been hired on July l, 1968, to design and teach the culinary technology curriculum. The new "D" (Birch) building had been approved on April 28, 1966, to have facilities for a "food service area to train chefs."

Chef Werth's establishing the culinary program at AB Tech and staying for twenty-six years was more or less by chance, but he was definitely the "right person at the right time." He had worked in New York hotels such as the Plaza and the Waldorf-Astoria before he became a food services' director at the Schering Corporation. While there and teaching cooking classes, he discovered what made him happier than anything else -- training other people to love the art of preparing food.

Werth came to North Carolina first as a food consultant for a company but soon found a teaching job at a New York community college. He missed North Carolina and decided he would write to the Governor of the state, Dan Moore at that time, to see if he knew of a school in North Carolina that might could utilize his teaching services. Chef laughs now about how naive this was, but it worked in 1968. Governor Moore sent a copy of his letter to Tom Simpson at AB Tech. Mr. Simpson knew talent when he saw it, even if he could not pronounce "bearnaise" sauce.

The first big undertaking may have given Chef Werth "second thoughts," but he persisted for twenty-six years still believing he could "raise the students, public, faculty, and administrators awareness of professional cooking as a vital art form. [Interview, fall 1995] After being hired by AB Tech, Chef started planning courses from the first of July until September. He was also trying to get the kitchen facilities ready in the newly built "D" building.

Before school opened in September 1968, Jack Davis, director of student personnel, requested that Chef Werth host a student service personnel dinner. Thirty-five representatives from every technical institute in North Carolina would be attending. Chef Werth felt this would be an excellent time to demonstrate "art" in the kitchen and agreed, starting to prepare a menu within the budget Jack Davis specified. John Woody in the carpentry department agreed to made a round tiered serving table for the food display. [Werth interview]

While Chef Werth was making preparations for how the dishes would be presented on this new table, he needed a few more items. First, he called Jack and asked if he could get two lobsters, only costing about a dime more per serving. Jack agreed. The next day, he called Jack to see if he could get a large whole salmon to steam -- only about a dime more per serving. Jack again agreed. The next day Chef called Jack and asked if he could, for only about fifteen cents more per serving, get a "moose." Jack exploded, saying, "Chef, where in the hell will we get a `moose'?" Jack had to admit he had never heard of a dessert called mousse. [Davis interview]

Chef Werth also decided he needed an ice carving for decoration. He worked diligently, chipping ice to make the school's "A" symbol. When finished, he had no freezer big enough to store it. Ivory Hunter, maintenance supervisor, had to haul it for storage to the ice depot on Meadow Road in the school's only truck with Chef in the back, hanging on to the ice carving to keep it from knocking around in the truck's open bed.

The next problem for the first presentation was that the event's time was nearing and the school still had not received, as it was supposed to have some needed items: the silverware, plates, serving dishes, pots or pans. A call to Mr. Buchanan at Buck's Restaurant on Tunnel Road solved this problem. Buck's supplied all the needed utensils, even offering that these could be brought back dirty, but Chef drew the limit there.

The evening before the event, Chef call Jack Davis and asked him to get him two boards so that he could place the large salmon between the boards and tie it to keep it flat for steaming. Jack ran to the carpentry shop, picking up two boards the size the Chef specified. Jack woke up early the day of the dinner and thought that in his speed to deliver, he did not check to see if he had picked solid boards or veneered boards with wood chip filling. His worst fears were realized when he arrived in the kitchen at Birch and observed Chef Werth trying to clean sawdust off the beautiful salmon. They decided a sign could be made, "For Display Only. Do Not Eat." Jack forgot all about the salmon and relaxed at the impressive dinner until Chef furtively whispered to him, "Somebody stole the salmon." They both anxiously awaited but never heard about illness or about the salmon again. AB Tech was a new environment with different programs; the staff had to learn as well as the students. [Werth and Davis interviews]

After all of Chef Werth's meticulous planning for the opening of the school year, only four students enrolled for the program in the fall of 1968. He was disappointed, but he persevered and never had that problem again. He remembers the names of the students, saying they were excellent: Philip Ball, Tahys Weiner, Mike Hollifield, and Larry Hayes.

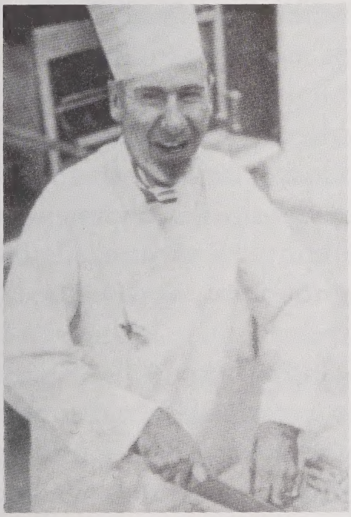
The reputation of the culinary and hotel-restaurant programs grew under the leadership of their instructors. In September of 1974, AB Tech was chosen by the Bureau of Naval Personnel as one of two schools in the country to conduct "pilot food department management for Navy professional chefs and cooks" so that they could see what civilians were preparing in the way of excellent food. Twenty-four attended to have the honor to start cooking at 5 a.m. straight through until 8 or 10 p.m. preparing varied dishes from a roasted whole pig to a cold Nova Scotia salmon steak mayonnaise to cracklin' cornbread. Chef Werth in his tall white hat was "whipping up sauces, slicing salmon, sauteing this or braising that -- all the while beaming broadly." [Mary Cowles, Asheville Citizen-Times, September 29, 1974]

Instructors Ann Cooley and Inez Faurot were training naval personnel in the kitchen while Jack Bolhuis was making sure their lodging in the school's motel units was perfect. Frederick Johnsson said because of their seriousness, they received a 10-weeks' college course in eight days including classroom sessions and briefings on menus and procedures involved. "Everybody in the hospitality division, from secretaries to maintenance men, plus the community `fell to' in a effort to produce, `instanter,' whatever happened to be needed." [Asheville Citizen-Times, September 1974]

Chef Werth is a member of the American Culinary Federation, the American Academy of Chefs, the Sommelier Society of America, plus others, and one of the only 55 chefs in the world to be named an honorary member of the Order of the Golden Toque. [Asheville Citizen, July 13, 1994] Chef Werth has prepared a banquet for former President Jimmy Carter, fixed lunch for Mrs. Walter Mondale and European royalty, been interviewed by Craig Claiborne, food editor of the New York Times. However, these are not the accomplishments of which he is most proud. His proudest achievements are the successes of his students.

A few former students he mentioned were Lawrence McFadden, who won gold medals and is currently executive chef at the River Club in Jacksonville, Florida, after being at the Market Place in Asheville, Greenbriar, Inter-Continental Hotel in Chicago, and the Waldorf-Astoria in New York; Darryl Shuford, who taught the Chef California cuisine when he went to visit him, now an executive chef at Sea Watch, Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Tom Young; Ethan Whitener; Sheila Tillman, who succeeded Werth as head of the culinary program at AB Tech, continuing his work with innovations of her own.

He said he learned much from his students. His students were always trained by classroom study, demonstration, then supervised work experience in the kitchen. The students prepared meals for the staff and the community once a week during their training, the price of the meal being only the costs of the food. He feels many of the restaurants in Asheville have benefited from the culinary program's teaching students classical cuisine.



Chef Werth in his "Usual" Uniform.

In 1975, Thomas Simpson, then President of AB Tech, wrote that Robert Werth's personal achievements are overshadowed only by his "willingness to assist the individual student in every way possible." Kathryn Lemieux, who was secretary in the hotel-restaurant division for over fifteen years and is currently secretary for the arts and science division, stated, "If a man's success is measured by the results of his life's work, Bob Werth is a phenomenal success."

Chef Werth said his greatest accolade was at his retirement party from AB Tech when Ray Bailey, President of AB Tech, said, "You put our school on the map." [Interview, Fall 1995] AB Tech would not have been the same from 1968 through 1994 without the lovable, humble, talented Chef Werth with his tall white hat.

Division of Medical-Dental and Allied Health

When the division of medical-dental and allied division was formed in 1969, there was no building on the campus for its classrooms and laboratories, but, of course, one was planned for and funding obtained.

Since 1959 Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute had accepted in a gradual way as part of its responsibility the area of health education in terms of curriculum and upgrading programs. With the increased emphasis on health on a national level, and with an ever increasing need for medical care facilities and medically trained personnel in Western North Carolina, it became apparent that a permanent paramedical facility was needed on the Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute campus to help alleviate this critical need for trained personnel.

A paramedical facility was approved in 1968, and the construction and equipping of this was planned to be completed by September of 1971. Curriculums were under consideration, including an associate degree program of nursing, medical

laboratory assistant, dental assisting, and others. The school already had a practical nurse education program, which would be the first curriculum program in the new facility. At this time the department of natural science was a part of this division.
[College catalog, 1969-70]

In October of 1966 a statewide committee was formed to discuss setting up several training courses in the state for certified laboratory assistants. Among them was a program at Memorial Mission Hospital under the overall direction of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute. The pathologists in the area, Dr. George Lacy and Dr. Roger Morrison, and Ty West of continuing education at AB Tech developed the curriculum.

The first class began in June of 1967 as a one-year continuing education certificate program at Memorial Mission Hospital under the medical direction of Dr. George Lacy, pathologist. Laura West was hired as the program director working directly under Ty West of AB Tech. Laura purchased the equipment and the supplies to start the program which was located in the Victoria Wing of Memorial Mission Hospital. The Manpower Development and Training Act provided funding, and students for the program were selected by John Love of the North Carolina Employment Security Commission.

Mr. Jim Winning, division director of allied health education, Dr. George Lacy, and Laura West worked together developing the program into a curriculum program. In the fall of 1970 the program became a curriculum program at AB Tech. it continued as a one-year diploma program until the fall of 1975 when the option of a second year of training was added. Graduates could now receive either a one-year diploma in medical laboratory assisting or a two-year AAS degree in medical laboratory technology. Julia Bemis became in instructor in 1972.

In 1982, because of the increasing complexity of the medical laboratory, the one-year graduate certification examination was discontinued. The curriculum was changed from an eight quarter program to seven quarters in the fall of 1987. The program has remained basically the same since this time except for new federal regulations in September 1992. In order to comply with the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act, certified laboratory assistants much have a minimum of an associate degree by the year 1997 if they are to continue performing "high complexity testing."

The medical laboratory technology program has served as the main source of certified laboratory assistants and medical laboratory technicians in Western North Carolina. This curriculum moved into the Rhododendron Building when it was completed in the fall of 1971, but it is currently housed in the Hemlock Building on AB Tech's campus. Laura West is still its chairperson; Patricia Patton Grimes has been an instructor in medical laboratory technology since 1978. [Program Overview, Laura West]

Laura S. West definitely enjoys and has enjoyed her instructing years at AB Tech. She still is enthusiastic and thinks the growth of the school has been "tremendous, fantastic" -- the greatest thing below the birth of her children. Laura's positive attitude and professionalism have made this program a big success.

Laura remembered going to her job as laboratory technician at Memorial Mission Hospital and wondering what that building activity was over on Victoria Road. She knew enough by 1966 to know she wanted to try to become a part of it. She said she applied for the job to be over the program but never having taught at the time, she was not positive she could do it and be successful, but she was willing to work hard to attempt it. She said Ruth Geddings, chairperson of the practical nursing, was a really big help when the program moved on the campus with decisions on necessary equipment. Laura was one who built a positive image for not only "her" program but also for AB Tech.

In 1969, James R. Winning was director of the new division with David Wolfe, hired 1968, as chairman of the natural sciences. David Wolfe was connected with the allied health program from its beginning. He was another one of these positive people who did his best and still is for the students at AB Tech. When David was hired to teach biology in 1968, he never foresaw the growth of the school although he believes that the development has been very good and helpful to students. David became director of the allied health division when Winning left in 1970 and served in this capacity until the fall of 1992. His greatest challenges and best experiences have resulted from his teaching and his students. Dave is currently a biology instructor in the arts and science division, still speaking enthusiastically about his experiences.

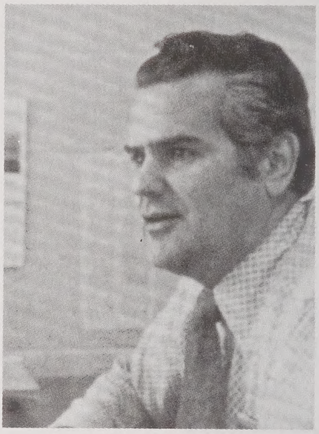
Before the facility was completed, other short courses were being offered, including aide and orderly training, refresher courses for registered nurse, licensed practical nurses, and private duty nurses, clinical sociology. Most of these courses were held at the local hospitals.

Division of General Education

"Related" faculty members taught support courses from 1961 for the various programs. These courses varied from mathematics, physics, English, sociology, psychology, chemistry.

For the fall of 1969, these instructors were placed in a division of their own, the division of general education. This division had no programs at this time.

Many more of these support instructors were hired from 1964 through 1969. Mathematics instructors were Thomas E. Gaffigan, hired in February of 1965; Richard M. (Mike) Holcombe, hired 1968, also taught engineering; Ron Bradshaw, hired 1969, also taught physics; Roy Lambert, hired 1965; Lowell Smith, hired 1965; Paul H. Reynolds, hired 1967, moved to business education by 1968. Toby Shook was hired in 1966 and became chairperson of the mathematics department and currently hold this position. Tom Gaffigan became the division director and is currently dean of arts and sciences. Mr. Gaffigan had taught mathematics and human relations as adult basic courses at Hendersonville High School before his full-time employment at AB Tech.



**Thomas E. Gaffigan, 1977,
Current Dean of Arts and Sciences**

Physics instructors were Murray Chidester, 1965; A. Chase Ambler, 1965; Bernard C. Smith, 1969, who taught until his retirement in 1991. C. Paul Lentzes taught from 1963 in physical science until his retirement in the 1970s.

Natural science courses were taught by Fanchon Funk from 1965 (part of allied health starting in 1968) and Richard L. Whittington, 1967.

Rex B. Blakeney, hired in 1966, taught electricity. Rex was a part of the faculty until his retirement. Rex was one of the friendliest people on campus and probably never met a stranger.

James B. Hurley, hired in 1965, to teach business administration courses, was in the general education division by 1969 and retired from this division. Mr. Hurley was a favorite with his fellow instructors. He had previously been an employee at

Champion Company in Canton, but, more importantly, he was the secretary for F. Scott Fitzgerald during the years that the famous writer lived at Grove Park Inn while his wife, Zelda, was hospitalized at a local sanatorium. Mr. Hurley was devoted to A-B Tech and to its purpose.

English teachers were Jeanne Cox, hired 1966; Katherine Morris, hired 1966. Maxie B. Welch, Jr., was hired in 1968 to teach English, psychology, and sociology. Max became department chairperson of English, psychology, and sociology until 1976. Max retired in 1995 and will be remembered as one who was always very supportive to his colleagues.

Bernard Smith, former chairperson of the physics department, now retired, said the first he knew of AB Tech was when he was going to teach at Lee Edwards High School and saw the first buildings going up. He didn't consider it a very significant event and never dreamed what would take place on Victoria Road, much less think that he would be an instructor at A-B Tech for twenty-three years. Bernard credits the success from the start with Mr. Simpson's realizing the timing was right and knowing how to get the proper funding and designing a school to meet the needs of Western North Carolina students. [Interview, Fall 1995]

Progress of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute, 1964-1969

At the start of the school year in the fall of 1964, the full-time faculty members totaled nine with thirteen part-time on the campus itself. [Asheville Citizen-Times, September 13, 1964] An example of the increase in students and the development of programs after the third building was completed for the fall of 1965 is shown when there were forty-four full-time instructors and administrators on the campus. [Asheville Citizen, October 30, 1965] By the fall of 1967, "Asheville Tech employed full-time teaching faculty of forty-one to instruct in 17 curriculum areas, Simpson reported. During the facility's first year the teaching faculty numbered seven. Five of the original seven members were still employed. [Asheville Times, November 14, 1968] There were 45 full-time faculty members for the fall of 1969.

There was even a growth at this time in the Board of Trustees. While an industrial education center, the board of trustees consisted of eight members. With the new name designation of a technical institution, four more members, appointed by Governor Terry Sanford, were sworn in at the January 1964 meeting: W. B. Dillard, Ernest Mills, John H. Giezentanner, Paul W. Markland. [Asheville Citizen, January 21, 1964]

Through 1964 and 1969, five new programs were started and two new buildings were added. The paramedical building and administration building had already been funded. Extension programs kept growing, from about 5,000 students to 8,000. The number of students in curriculum programs on campus grew from 611 to over 800.

With Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute's growth, the administrators decided it was time to be recognized and become accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The accreditation process started by an initial review committee visit in the spring of 1968 and an advisory committee in the fall of 1969. These visitation committees did a preliminary evaluation and made suggestions on what should be done to be able to qualify for accreditation.

The final self-study was submitted, and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute was accredited on December 3, 1969, at the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools at its annual convention in Dallas, Texas. Mr. Simpson stated, "This marks the culmination of two years of combined effort by trustees, faculty, administrators, and students to achieve acceptance by our regional accrediting agency. To us, it signifies recognition by a traditionally academic body of the quality instruction offered to our students." [Asheville Citizen, December 4, 1969]

Chapter 4

ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE TECHNICAL INSTITUTE'S GROWTH, 1970 - 1975

The years of 1970 through 1975 started off as promising with Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute's new status as an accredited school by the Southern Association. More enrollment was expected. The opening of the new paramedical building for the fall of 1971 offered a real service to the community by expanding opportunities for Western North Carolina students to enter the growing health fields. After the opening of Birch Building in 1968, the business division was growing with more options for students in their choices of study. Unexpectedly, more land for the school was available -- needed acres for expansion, plus buildings. Sports were becoming important. Studies were being made in 1974 to see what new programs would be feasible. "Exciting developments in curriculum and a $9.5 million expansion are projected in a master plan for Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute now in the hands of the State Board of Education." [Asheville Citizen, February 12, 1975]

However, in 1975, a sudden traumatic event upset the optimistic administrators, staff, faculty, and students. The "best laid" plans were in doubt.

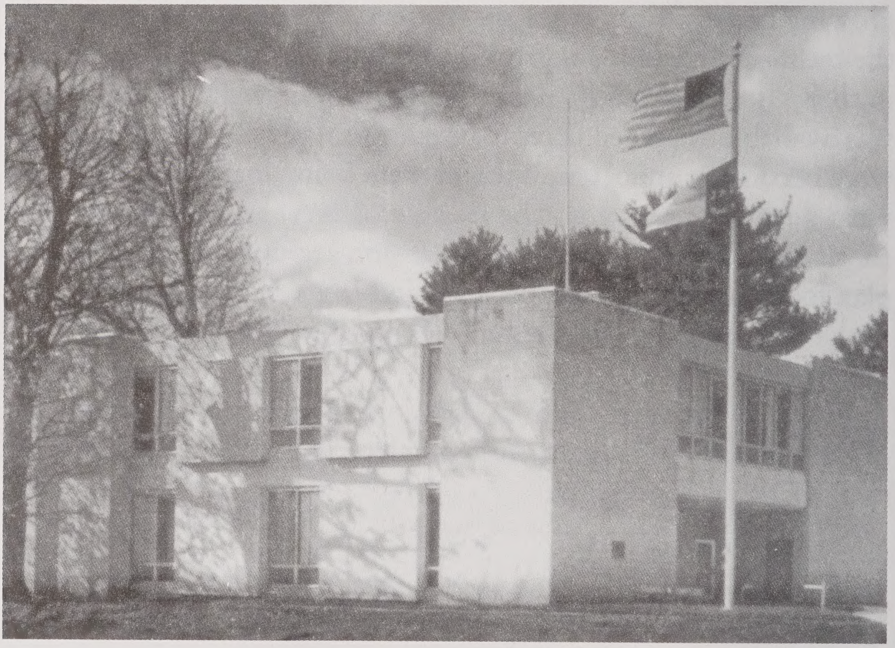
Buildings and Land Acquisition

Buildings

In September of 1968, Asheville-Buncombe Technical institute submitted funding requests to the Appalachian Regional

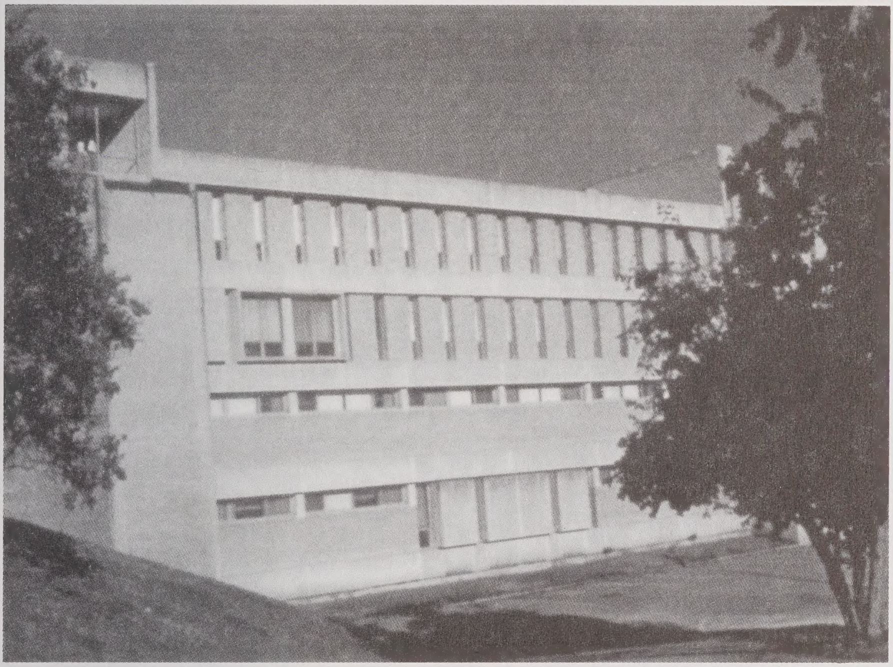
Development Act and the Buncombe County Capital Outlay Fund for construction of a new administration building and an allied health building. The granted funds were for $1.5 million.

By August of 1971, "the $495,000 administration building, immediately across Victoria Road from the structure which formerly housed the administration offices is now in full operation and buzzing with activity." [Asheville Citizen, August 19, 1971] At this time the administration building housed the offices of the president and other administrative officials, extension personnel, and the student services area, including counseling and testing departments and student records.



Administration Building, 1971

The paramedical building, a four-story structure of about 30,000 square feet, cost about $1.2 million. This building was designed to house six departments: practical nurse education, associate degree of nursing, medical laboratory assistants, dental education, department of natural sciences, department of x-ray technology.



Paramedical Building, 1971

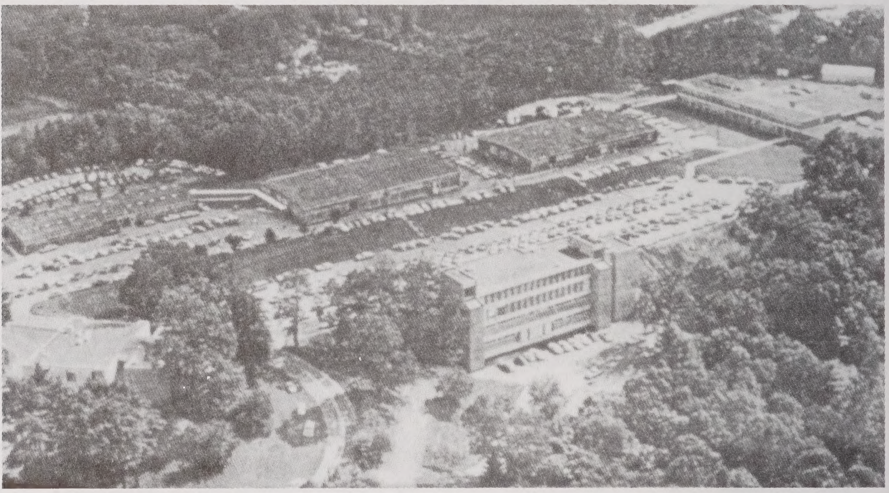
In the fall of 1971, there were six buildings on A-B Tech's campus on Victoria Road. The 28.44 acres of land were just about filled.

Land Acquisition

With the lack of space for more buildings, very little further development could be made. The existing twenty-eight acre campus was respectable but not "big." Only one piece of property was purchased for A-B Tech during 1970 through 1975, but what a piece of property: 78.08 acres plus four buildings.

"Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute, which opened its doors in 1961 with 158 students and now has more than eight times that many, at last has ample room to grow in. Title to the former Asheville Catholic High School property was transferred to the institute Monday morning, finalizing purchase of the 79-acre tract for $859,000." [Mary Cowles, Asheville Citizen, May 28, 1974] The agreement had been made on May 9, 1974.

The classroom building (now Laurel) and the gymnasium were already being used by A-B Tech through a lease agreement made in 1971 with Asheville Catholic High School.



A-B Tech's Campus in 1973

Students

The curriculum and the continuing education enrollments kept growing from 1970 through 1975. Students enrolled in the curriculum programs grew steadily from 1,025 in 1970 to 1,662 in

1975. Students enrolled in the continuing education courses were more "up and down" with 6,936 in 1970, with a rise to 9,851 in 1971, the 8,000 range in 1972, 1973, and 1975. The top figure of 9,909 was in 1974.

In 1974, a five-year graduate follow-up had been made. At that time 92 percent of the graduates reported themselves employed in the field for which they had prepared and, of these, only one percent reported dissatisfaction. Also, 80 percent of the graduates said the degree or diploma earned at A-B Tech had either been necessary or helpful in obtaining and retaining present employment. Thirteen percent of the graduates reported that they were employed on at least a part-time basis, while 802, or 44.46 percent were working a minimum of 40 hours per week while taking curriculum classes.

Jack Davis, who was vice president of student services at that time, stated that 431 members of A-B Tech's student body had from one to three years of college before entering the institute, while 95 had four years of college or more.

The students in 1975 came from 28 Western North Carolina high schools and 20 area colleges. Present students came from thirty-two North Carolina counties and 13 other states plus six foreign countries. Forty-one percent of the students were married and about half had full-time jobs. Three-fifths of the students were 20 years old or older.

Extracurricular Activities

In 1967, the trustees of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute decided that their students needed some extracurricular activities, so they built a tennis court. One tennis court.

However, after a real gymnasium was leased, some wanted more extracurricular activities, and some faculty members were willing to help.

"You played college basketball, where?"

"A-B Tech for the `Atomics.' We had a great team. Coach Rhea was great. There was a girl's team, cheerleaders, everything!"

"In your dreams. A-B Tech doesn't have sports."

"No, but they did once. Ray Bailey, the President of the school now, even went on the bus with us and kept singing something about a dead skunk in the middle of the road."

A-B Tech did have an intercollegiate basketball team, the Atomics, which was developed by Jim Rhea in 1970. The intercollegiate basketball became a reality when the A-B Tech students voted to have an activity fee and wanted a basketball team.

The first game was played against Warren Wilson's Owls in the fall of 1970. The first players on the Atomics included Larry Elliot, Larry Metcalf, George Gibson, Wayne Parris, Bill Morgan, Gene Anders, Frank Farmer, Rick Griswold, Stan King, Jack LeBlau, Roger Plemmons, and Terry Roberts. All of these students were from Western North Carolina.

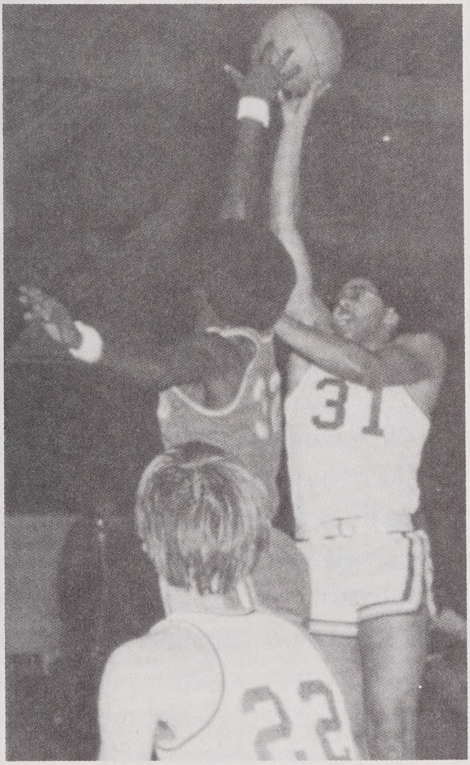
The Atomics had some great years between 1974 and 1977. The 1975 team became 4th ranked in the nation in the National Little College Athletic Association. A-B Tech's Tim Templeton was ranked 11th among the association's top scorers with a 21.2 average. Other members of this team included Mike Bowlin, David Jones, Mike Silvers, Bobby Smith, Rick Elingburg. This team went to the regional playoffs.

Coach Rhea also had a dedicated team the next year that made it to the National tournament. In addition to Elingburg and Bowlin from the previous season, players included Larry Suber, W. C. Hare, Dennis Gillespie, Darrel Boone, Butch Robinson, Gene Edwards.

Coach Rhea said that even though the Atomics never won the National championship, he worked with a great group of players and that it was fun trying. Plus, most people feel ever being rated 4th in the nation is very commendable.

Coach Jim Rhea, an athlete from Canton, had attended N. C. State on a football scholarship. He was the basketball, golf, and tennis coach from 1970 until 1983. Jackie Warren was basketball coach from 1983 - 1986. The girls' intercollegiate team was coached by Ken Driver.

At A-B Tech, there was no alumni group to back the students' activity fees for intercollegiate sports. As the games became more and more expensive to participate in, the existing funds could not keep the program going. But, yes, there were college basketball teams at A-B Tech.



The 1977 Atomics in Action.

Office of Student Services

With more students Jane A. Luther was hired as a counselor from 1971 through 1974. In 1972, Earl H. Thompson, Jr., was hired as the first financial aid officer. By 1974, Glenn T. Anderson was director of financial aid and still serves in this capacity at A-B Tech. By 1974 Richard C. Wilson was the veterans service officer; in 1975 Paul Hensley held this position and continued to serve in it until his retirement in 1994.

Since the college was established in 1959, it had offered students financial assistance. From 1959 until 1974 the program consisted of locally sponsored scholarships and loan programs and a government funded work program which helped students offset a portion of their tuition fees, books, and supply expenses. From the start of the school until 1973, about eight hundred students were assisted with $135,000 in funds. In 1974 the program was expanded to enable all students without adequate financial resources to attend school. This program included grants, scholarships, loans, and work opportunities and increased greatly the number of students who could receive help. ["Asheville Buncombe Technical College 25th Anniversary Annual Report," 1985]

Administrators and Staff

Most of the administrators, except for in the continuing education division, stayed the same from 1970 until 1975. Many valuable new staff members were hired. Bobby Freeman was coordinator of equipment and later became director of buildings and grounds until his retirement in 1993. Alden Chrisawm became bookstore manager before he became a director of business services. Marie Farley was a long-time bookstore clerk.

Barbara Smith was hired as a secretary in 1974 and currently is an instructor in the business division. Rhonda West is another one who was a long-time secretary and is now an instructor in the business division. Emma K. Smith, Margaret Shope, and Eileen Williams were secretaries at this time. Margaret and Eileen are still at A-B Tech. Rebecca Murray is a long-time employee in the custodial staff.

Marie Pinner was hired as A-B Tech's switchboard operator on September 1, 1971. Switchboard operators before Marie were Hilda Ingle, Charlene Noblitt, and Janice Awald/King. Marie remembered, when driving to the school to submit her application, she hoped she'd be coming that road every day. After talking with Ray Bailey and being hired, she did come that same road -- neither rain, sleet, hail, nor buckets of snow kept Marie from her appointed switchboard -- for twenty-one years before she retired in 1992.

The switchboard at the time of her employment was in the lobby of Birch Building. Marie said she got so used to the noise and confusion that when she later moved to the administration building it was too quiet and that she missed the students very much. She remembered Mr. Simpson's fussing at her on Fridays after five o'clock because she had not left the switchboard, but she said Chef Werth often needed orders for food; plus, she had a hard time leaving when the phone was ringing. She felt it was her job to answer that phone.

Marie took her job more seriously than most people take jobs. Any faculty members between 1971 and 1992 should remember really bad icy or snowy days when they decided it was too bad to venture out. As they were at home, drinking their coffee, Marie had made it to the switchboard for business as usual. Plus, she would cheerfully answer when they called, giving the bad road conditions and agreeing that they should not try it. One snowy day she drove but couldn't make it up Victoria Road from Meadow Road. She left her car and walked on, having to crawl up the steps because of a snow drift, but she got the switchboard going.

She decided after that she would take the bus, but often it would not leave Biltmore Avenue to go Victoria, so she'd walk from there. Ray Bailey had told her the school would pay for her to take a cab on really bad days. One day as he barely made it in, she had just arrived from the walk on Biltmore Avenue, where the bus had put her off, carrying a crock pot full of homemade soup for the ones who could make it. She told him, when asked about the cab, that she did not want to wait for one. She was dependable and professional, never telling what she should not.

Marie said one of the worst experiences was when she received a call from a man who said he'd placed a bomb in Birch Building. She said she tried to ask him where and the time it was set to go off, but he was evasive. She said she frantically called Olin Wood; he was not in. Mr. Haynes, no answer. She said before she went into a complete panic, Dr. Wood called her so she could relate the message.

Dr. Wood called Birch Building and said to evacuate the students. Staff and faculty quickly spread the word and had all students outside and away from close range of the building. Then, the faculty members were told to go back inside and search file cabinets, rest rooms, waste cans, etc. to see if a bomb could be found. While the faculty members were diligently scouring the building, poking here and there, Asheville's bomb squad crew arrived, with welding looking helmets, asbestos suits, heavy gloves, boots. They were dumbfounded to find the searching faculty members inside and hollered for them to get out immediately.

When back outside, the faculty members, being shocked by the outfits of the real searchers, decided they'd gone beyond the call of duty that time and vowed never to search for bombs again.

Marie said her time at A-B Tech was very enjoyable and that she had very few bad times. However, one embarrassing incident that her fellow staff members liked to tease her about forever was over a ham sandwich. The staff shared a refrigerator where they kept their lunches. One day Marie's sister packed her lunch and put it in a regular brown bag. At lunchtime, Marie went upstairs to the snack area in the Simpson Administration Building with a brown bag she had taken out of the refrigerator and sat down to eat the ham sandwich that was in it. As she was eating, she wondered why her sister had just loaded that sandwich with black pepper. As Marie was eating, trying to wipe off some of the pepper, another employee came up fuming that someone had stolen her lunch from the refrigerator. The lost-lunch employee was fussing and munching on peanut butter crackers from the vending machine while Marie was just carrying on about how terrible that was and that she just could not imagine anybody doing that. She listened and watched Marie finish off the sandwich. Marie had a strange feeling, particularly about all that pepper. She went to the refrigerator and found she had picked out the wrong lunch bag. She apologized, trying to get her victim to eat her lunch, but no one let her forget it. [Interview, Fall 1995]

Library Staff

From 1970 through 1975, Shirley McLaughlin was still the librarian. The associate librarian from 1970-1971 was Martha English; then, Donna Hawks was hired as the second professional librarian in 1972. Billie Dalton was a pleasant secretary in the library for 18 years before her retirement in 1981. Maretta Kuykendall was a library technical assistant before she became bookstore manager.

During this time, a $300,000 grant to buy new materials was provided by the State in an effort to improve the library's selections for Southern Accreditation standards. The library was still in Birch Building and occupied 2,875 square feet of space.

In 1975, Peggy Kyle was hired as an associate librarian, and Richard B. English was hired as an audio-visual technician.

Programs and Faculty

From 1970 through 1975, six medical programs moved onto the A-B Tech campus or were developed. The business education division added various options in programs. The hotel/restaurant division added one new option. By February of 1975, there were 24 curriculums with eight options. The original staff of 14 had grown to 140.

Seven of the faculty members at this time included, seated Bernard Smith, Stans Sluder, Colonel D. Robinson, Rex Blakney; standing, Richard Croom, Jim Rhea, W. T. Davis.

Division of Allied Health Programs

With the opening of the paramedical building in the fall of 1971, programs were moved from the local hospitals to the Victoria Road campus and the dental programs were developed. The two year associate degree programs were associate degree of nursing, x-ray technician, and dental hygiene. One year diploma programs were practical nursing, medical laboratory assistant, and dental assistant. The programs to start in September on the campus were filled with 170 students with a waiting list before the building opened. The plan was to expand to 350 students. Twenty-two instructors were hired for the current enrollment.

"We will still use the hospitals for clinical experience and this fall we will use Highland Hospital in addition to St. Joseph's and Memorial Mission, but the classrooms will be on campus. We will have our own staff but will work closely with the hospital staffs, and they will help supervise," said James Winning, director of the school's allied health education division. [Asheville Citizen, August 19, 1971]

In the summer of 1968, Memorial Mission Hospital decided to phase out their three-year diploma program in nursing. A cooperative effort between the boards of trustees of Memorial Mission Hospital and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute developed the associate degree nursing program under the leadership of A-B Tech. The associate degree nursing program accepted the first class of 30 students in September 1970, with 18 completing the requirements in August of 1972.

Ann Scofield was hired as the acting director in May of 1970 and was named chairperson in 1972. Kathryn Daughton assumed the position in March 1973. In 1976, Daughton assumed joint responsibility for the practical nursing and the associate degree nursing, a position she held until her retirement in 1990. Dot Aycock, who had been hired as a nursing instructor in 1970, then became the chairperson. Other nursing instructors hired from 1970 through 1975 were Metta Buckner in 1970, Estelle Nowicki in 1971, Patricia Poret in 1972, Carolyn M. Poynter in 1973, Harriet Fridl Krickhan in 1974, Judith Noth and Eileen Rowe in 1975.

The Associate Degree Nursing Program is fully approved by the North Carolina Board of nursing. Currently about fifty-six students are admitted annually with approximately forty graduating each year.

Contracted clinical agencies include St. Joseph's Hospital for medical/surgical experiences, Memorial Mission for medical/surgical, maternity and pediatric rotations, Greentree Ridge for inclusion of gerontology, and Highland Hall for psychiatric study. In response to a trend toward increased community-based care, a contract was initiated in the summer of 1993 to enable students to rotate to the Buncombe county Health Department to gain experience in the prenatal/family planning clinic.

Associate degree nursing graduates supply a major percentage of the registered nurse pool for Western North Carolina. Of the 838 graduates, at least 85 percent have remained in the western area to meet staffing needs. [Program Overview, Director of Development Office]

The radiologic program at A-B Tech enrolled its first class in the fall of 1971. The School of X-Ray Technology was developed in 1960 by Memorial Mission Hospital. With increasing programmatic accreditation standards and emphasis on academic education, all parties involved believed the training for radiologic technologists in the area would be better provided through an institution of higher learning.

The faculty members first employed to lead the radiologic technology program were Henry B. Dawkins, who was the department chairperson until the fall of 1991, and Maxine Deweese, who was a program instructor until the fall of 1984. Other full-time instructors who have been associated with the program were Debra Reese, who was employed from the fall of 1984 until the summer of 1988, and Donald Rogers, who has been associated with the program since the summer of 1988. Debra Reese was re-employed by the college in the fall of 1991 as the department chairperson. Brenda Phillips was employed by the college as a full-time instructor in August 1992 after the death of Henry Dawkins in February of 1992. Henry Dawkins is remembered at A-B Tech as an instructor who showed much concern about the successes of his students. Mr. Dawkins established a program that aided the community.

The program has been accredited by the Committee on Allied Health Education and Accreditation of the American Association as recommended by the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology and was awarded full five-year reaccreditation in May, 1993.

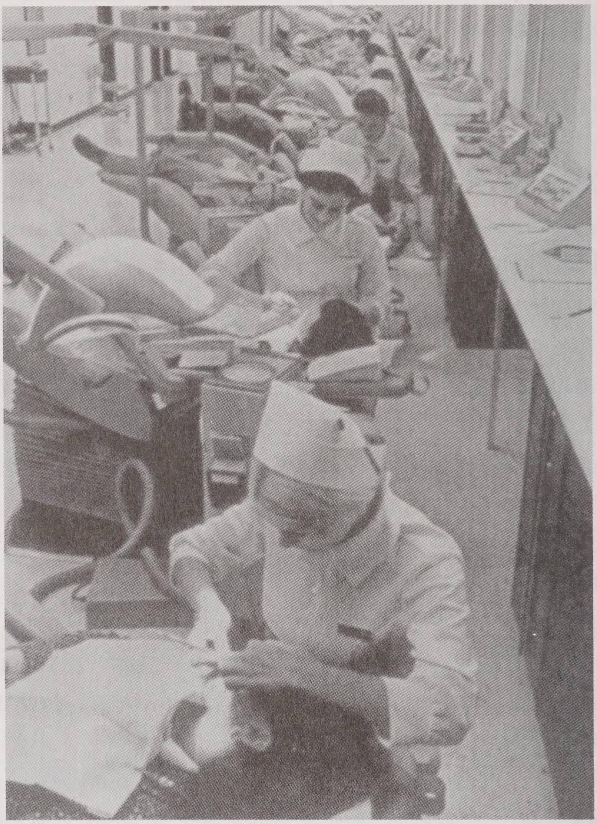
The four clinical sites utilized by the radiologic technology program include Memorial Mission Hospital, St. Joseph's Hospital, Veterans Administration Medical Center, and Margaret R. Pardee Memorial Hospital.

Specific areas of change in the 1992 curriculum revision included the addition of courses in film evaluation, quality assurance, and ethics/communication, as well as the deletion of courses no longer specifically required by the accreditation agency or certification exam. In the fall of 1994, the patient care course was renamed, a change was made in the biology course requirements to be compatible with the other allied health programs, and a lab component was added to certain radiography courses.

The radiologic technology program at A-B Tech has served as the main source of entry-level radiographers in the area ever since the program graduated its first class in 1973. [Program Overview, Department of Development Office]

In 1970, the Buncombe County Dental Society initiated the concept of having dental hygiene and dental assisting programs at A-B Tech and appointed an advisory committee to work with James Winning, the division director of allied health. Appointed to the committee were Doctors Charles Candler, Max Carpenter, Fenton Cunningham, Jack Girard, William Mynatt, Tom Morris, and Joe Roberson.

The dental hygiene and dental assisting programs at A-B Tech began September 1972. Winning said the "showplace of the [paramedical] building" would be the dental clinic with its 12 chairs and supporting x-ray units immediately behind them. [Asheville Citizen, August 19, 1971]



Dental Hygiene Students by 1974, Performing in Their "Showplace."

Dr. Baker Hamilton was employed as chairperson of both the dental hygiene and dental assisting programs in the spring of 1972. Rita Milberg was employed in 1972 and served as associate chairperson of dental hygiene. Also, in dental hygiene were Jean Stines, hired October 1, 1972; Sherry Shields became the third full-time instructor on July l, 1973.

In the spring of 1974, Jean Stines and Sherry Shields said the day they got back the envelope with the results of their first graduating classes' results on the Dental Hygiene National Board Examination was the day of the spring picnic with classes dismissed for the afternoon. After getting the envelope, they sat down on the grassy bank between Azalea and Rhododendron Buildings to open it. When Jean eased out the results and showed Sherry that all the students had passed, they just rolled around in the grass, laughing and squealing. As soon as they "came to," they looked around, hoping no one had seen them. Students really do not understand sometimes when instructors are so persistently hard on them that they want them to be successful. Jean said that even though they knew how to do the job themselves, they were not sure if they could teach others what to do. The educational "jargon" was confusing to them.

In the spring of 1974, these sixteen students also completed all requirements for graduation, passed their state board exam, and were quickly employed by the dental community. The faculty felt secure in their ability to teach. Upon completion of the dental hygiene program, which is seven quarters, students receive an associate in applied science degree. Students, upon graduation, are eligible to take the national and state board examinations. A passing grade on both examinations is required for practice as a registered dental hygienist in North Carolina.

The 1975 graduates provided the faculty with even more reason to be proud when they scored the highest of any two-year college in the country on the National Board Examination and tenth overall, including four-year universities. This was the first year an A-B Tech student, Glenna Allison Moore, received a score of 99, the highest score a student can achieve on this examination.

From 155 schools, 4,441 students had taken this test. In 1975, Margaret Seegars was a dental hygiene instructor.

Dental Hygiene Graduating Classes, 1974 and 1975

The program has continued to have a high passing rate on the National Board with an overall average of 94.1 percent for all graduates from 1974 - 1992. By 1992, the dental hygiene program had five on-site visits by the Commission on Dental Accreditation. The program has been given full accreditation. Through 1991-92, there have been 327 students enrolled in the dental hygiene program and 273 students have graduated.

Jean Stines retired in May of 1992. Shaun Tate joined the faculty in 1978, replacing Beth Seegars Fisher. Rita Milberg resigned in 1975. Three dentists served as the chairperson of dental hygiene from 1972 - 1984; Dr. Baker Hamilton from 1972-1976; Dr.

Kurt Truax from 1976-1982; Dr. David Constantinos from 1982-1984. Dr. Robert Holmes joined the faculty in 1984 and serves both the dental assisting and dental hygiene programs. In 1984, Jean Stines became the chairperson of dental hygiene; Shaun Tate was appointed chairperson in 1992. [Interviews Jean Stines, Sherry Shields, fall 1995]

The dental assisting program, which is four quarters, trains students to provide treatment services and to have dental office management skills. These graduates may take a national board examination for certification.

The instructors hired for dental assisting in 1972 were Lyn P. Morrow, Doris Cunningham, and Ann C. Evans. Ann Evans became the chairperson of dental assisting in 1984.

Instructors hired in 1992 in the dental programs included Tamara W. Baldwin, Sharon Docktor, and Jill Nield Gehrig, who is now dean of the allied health and public service education. Hired in 1993 were Elizabeth Fennigan and Rebecca Scroda.

Division of Business Education

Students interested in the business programs at A-B Tech grew rapidly after the completion of Birch Building in 1968. The division contained three areas of study: business administration with options, electronic data processing, and secretarial science. Particularly, business administration was a broad field, and many students were more interested in one aspect of the program than another. Therefore, after basic courses, students could choose the particular fields they wished to concentrate in.

In 1970, when Olin R. Wood was director of the business education, the options started being developed in the business administration program. The first two developed were the accounting option and the industrial management option.

Olin Wood, 1977, Currently, Vice-president of Instructional Services.

The accounting option was developed to provide necessary training for entry-level positions in this field. In 1971, Roger Wolfe was the first certified public accountant (CPA) hired. Mr. Wolfe was employed at the school until he opened his own business. At this time, 1975, Martha J. Marshall, also a CPA, was hired. Ms. Marshall was an excellent instructor at A-B Tech until she was hired as an instructor at UNC-A in 1981. Sherman W. Young, Jr., CPA, was hired in 1981 and continues to be an instructor at the school.

The industrial management option was developed to train students in the management-supervisory area or to "upgrade" present employees. The courses in this option are revised periodically to correlate with work demands and stress training in planning work procedures and analyzing work problems.

The marketing option was added in 1974 to prepare students for entry-level to middle management positions in marketing, retailing, and sales fields.

From 1976 through 1979, a postal service management option was offered in the business division as an evening program. This program was designed for postal officials in order for them to achieve training for competitive examinations, perform job skills, and receive an AAS degree to enhance opportunities in promotion in management ranks.

More faculty members had to be hired to teach students in these fields. William D. McDowall, Jr., was hired in 1973 for business administration and continued teaching until he went to law school and is a practicing attorney in Asheville. In the fall of 1974, James A. Hagan was hired and became department chairperson in 1986. Mr. Hagan is also well-known for his success in teaching night courses that have enabled people to receive their state real estate licenses. D. Harold Ponder was hired as an instructor in 1974 and still serves at the school. Jane Smith was a business instructor from 1977 until she became director of personnel in 1984. Kathy S. Toler and Carol Y. Mull were hired as instructors in 1983. These two capable instructors are still teaching.

Richard M. White, who was an instructor at A-B Tech from 1965 until his retirement in 1994 and served as the chairperson and the division director of business education, was very proud of how many of the business graduates had been successful in their fields. He felt the business instructors held high standards that were beneficial for its graduates.

In 1975, two options were offered in the electronic data processing, business programming and data processing operations. The business programming was seven quarters and offered as an associate degree while the data processing operations was four quarters and led to a state diploma. This diploma program was discontinued after 1985. The program electronic data processing then became business computer programming.

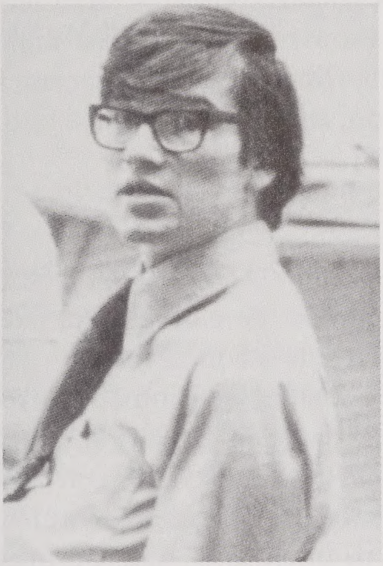
Max Hutchins, who was hired in 1973 as an instructor in office education, became the chairperson when Sara Morris became director of the business division. Max served as department chairperson until he became dean of the evening programs in 1985. At this time Carol Mull assumed this position. (With later restructuring, Carol's title changed.)

Beginning in the 1973-74 school year, the students in the office education area were able to choose one of two approaches to achieve the goal of acquiring the skills necessary for an office job: secretarial science or office technology. Both programs were 21 months in length and both awarded an associate degree. The main difference in the two programs was that the secretarial course required Gregg's shorthand and a seventh quarter of cooperative education for those in the office technology program. In the 1976-77 school year, a change resulted in the secretarial graduates receiving an associate degree and office technology students receiving a technical diploma.

With the growth of these programs, Sallie Graves was hired in 1974. Jewell McDaniel still taught in this program until her death. She was a favorite with the students and staff members. Barbara L. Smith was hired in 1980 and Sylvia McCarty in 1985 to teach in the office education program. In 1985-86, the associate degree was again awarded to graduates of both the secretarial and office programs.

Computers had been introduced into this department in 1983, and by 1986, the department had two full computer labs and had installed an IBM System/36 minicomputer. Courses in word processing concepts and microcomputer operations were added to the curriculum. By 1989, there was one program, general office.

Max Hutchins was one hard to fit into one category, such as instructor or administrator -- as a dean or as associate vice president for the continuing education. Faculty members said he has served well in all positions, so his start at A-B Tech was the solution.



Max Hutchins, 1975, Currently, Vice-president, Continuing Education.

Max Hutchins was hired in August 1973 to be an instructor for the new two-year office technology program. He did enjoy teaching at A-B Tech, particularly seeing students progress as they gained skills. He became department chairperson in August of 1975 and felt he had learned much from Sara Morris who was excellent in adapting methodology to ensure student success - using individualized instruction, video slides, team teaching. He felt she developed two good programs and was a great help to him --plus she was a big influence on the whole school.

He felt the major changes in office technology came about with the development of microcomputers. Students had to be computer-literate to obtain and keep office positions.

Max enjoyed being dean of instruction for the night programs, making his rounds to be sure everything was going as it was supposed to be -- even finding chalk for the adjunct faculty if necessary. In his "spare time" when he was not frustrated over finding chalk, he evaluated students' transfer credits, counseled students for admissions, and scheduled night classes. In December of 1995, Max became associate vice president of continuing education, another position he finds to be a challenge. [Interview, fall 1995]

General Education

As more programs were developed, faculty members were added to the general education division. These courses, taken outside their own program divisions, required students to take English courses for written and oral communication skills, mathematics and science to aid in their programs, sociology and psychology for a better understanding of human relations.

From 1970 through 1975, English instructors hired were Cynthia M. Daniels, 1970-1972; Celia H. Miles, 1971, currently English and foreign language department chairperson; Jo Marguerite Graybeal, 1972; William E. Knight, 1973; Ellen Honts Price, 1973, currently an instructor in guided studies; Joyce J. Parris, 1973. Mathematics instructors hired were James Philip Paxton, 1971; Faye Muse, 1973, currently a mathematics instructor and a counselor; Walter Thompson, 1975. Psychology and sociology instructor hired was William L. Collins, 1972, currently chairperson of humanities. Hired to teach natural science was M. Douglas Nodine, 1973. At this time natural science was in the allied health division and not part of general education until 1977 as biology.

Division of Hotel/Restaurant Management

In 1974, the culinary program started offering a one-year course in culinary arts. This was discontinued in 1984. Jeff Myron was hired as a hotel/restaurant management instructor in 1975. Ann Cooley who had taught in the culinary since 1965 left in 1975.

Continuing Education

Continuing education kept growing in all areas. More administrators were needed. These administrators in the continuing education moved many times on A-B Tech's campus. From the old "Green House" to the motel rooms to the newly constructed administration building in 1971 then to Hemlock Building. Since 1989 and currently the staff members are in the Pines Building where there is more room for courses on the Victoria Road campus.

The basic law enforcement training course was created in the early 1970s as a result of legislative action that required law enforcement officers to receive training in order to work in a "sworn position." The North Carolina Community College System took on the responsibility of offering the course and, locally, it was placed under the continuing education at A-B Tech in 1971. (This was moved to general education when the two-year law enforcement technology degree program was developed.)

Ilka Bowditch McDowell became the associate coordinator of the learning laboratory in 1971. Ilka continues at the school as the GED examiner. The services of the learning lab have currently been absorbed into the guided studies department.

A-B Tech took over the Mountain Manpower, Inc., about 1971, and the name changed to Manpower Development Program.

The main purpose of the program is to find jobs for people in order to make them self-sufficient. For the number of hours they spend in school, "most of them are paid the minimum wage of $2.30 an hour, usually a 30-hour week. They are capable of being productive, with training and guidance, and eager to be so, else they wouldn't be here. The place itself is enough to give one a new outlook on life, but if it doesn't, the program does."
[Bob Terrell, "Manpower Development," Asheville Citizen, February 7, 1976]

Classes for these students are held on the campus of A-B Tech in Magnolia Building, the old Fernihurst, the mansion built by John Connally in the late 1800s. There are two phases to this program: the basic education and the job preparation. The program normally lasts ten weeks. Blake Davis became the coordinator for the Manpower Development Program. Burney H. Gardner was an instructor in this program.

In continuing education, Bob Poore was the area consultant for development training. Arthur M. Taylor became director of the adult basic education in 1974, following Ray E. Sawyer. Jean Clayton became the director in 1978. Jean became the first female director in the continuing education division. In 1984, Jean was elected as the second woman president of the North Carolina Community Adult Educators Association. She feels the strength and growth of the adult basic education can be attributed to the good teachers the division is able to hire and the flexibility of the courses, enabling administrators to switch emphasis when needed for the students. For example, in the past few years there has been an increased demand for English as a second language course, and the native languages the students speak have varied over the years. In recent years the predominance of Hispanic has given over to the Eastern Bloc population -- Russian, Yugoslavian, and Czechoslovakian.

Another change Jean has seen is a trend toward basic skills as much as literacy. Some people cannot achieve because of socially unacceptable behavior and need help. Another difference is, in the past, that if individuals had a high school diploma, no matter what their true reading level was, they were not eligible for adult basic courses. Now they are and are recommended from the guided studies courses if their reading level is below ninth grade level.

Another new development is offering compensatory education for the mentally challenged to teach them social and life skills in order to enable these individuals, if possible, to live independently or in group homes.

One of Jean's biggest challenges was helping to line up a project in 1988 to promote literacy. This was a program that had been designed and tried by Sharon Darling and the Parent and Child Education Program in Kentucky. The goal of the program was to help parents, mainly on public assistance, who had not finished high school and who had pre-school children, learn to help themselves. William Kenan, Jr., of Chapel Hill, N. C., had taken an interest in the success of this program, established the Kenan Trust Family Literacy Project, and provided a major grant which would include this program in four North Carolina counties with administration provided by local schools and community colleges. Madison County was included, and Jean set up the program at Walnut.

The program, basically, was that the parent would ride the school bus with the preschool child or children, spend half the day doing basic education to enable them to pass the GED examination while their children were learning basic kindergarten skills. After the parents and children had lunch together, the parents would play games with their children, something many of them had never done before. Classes for parents also were taught in child discipline and career counseling.

Regina Lynn with her son was one in the first graduating class. She later graduated from Mars Hill College, summa cum laude, and now works with the American Literacy Program. She is trying to "pay back" how this opportunity improved her life and the lives of her children.

Jean said she was always enthusiastic about the adult basic education program and promoting literacy since she had seen the difference it had made in people's lives. To publicize what A-B Tech was offering to help the reading challenged, she and Lowell Smith, the dean of continuing education, were excited when they were invited to be interviewed by Edna Edwards in a "Know Your Neighbor" program on station WFGW. (This is known locally as "Billy Graham's radio station" and is situated about a mile and a half west of Black Mountain on Highway 70 and over the railroad tracks to the south.) Jean and Lowell, dressed to make an impression at the station, left in time for their "live" interview at 9 a.m. They were not even worried when they turned south off Highway 70 into the station's driveway to see a long train blocking their entry. They sat and sat; the train sat and sat. It was now nearing the interview time. About the time they were getting a little nervous about making the interview, they noticed the slight opening on the box car in front of them. Leaving the car, they scrambled into the box car, getting the door opened enough on the other side to awkwardly emerge. Straightening her dress, Jean noticed there was a car parked on the emerging side of the box car next to the radio station with people watching them and staring in amazement. As she and Lowell rushed by the car and into the station, all Jean could think to say to them was, "Only way to go!"

Big Plans for the Future at A-B Tech

In 1974 and 1975, long-range goals were being set for programs in all divisions and in new constructions.

"In planning future program development and expansion, conclusions were based on population analysis, enrollment data, follow-up of graduates and surveys of business and industry needs." [Asheville Citizen, February 12, 1975]

In the spring of 1974, Mr. Simpson asked the other administrators, faculty, and staff if, after their regular assignments, they would do a survey to see what programs would be feasible for A-B Tech to pursue in the next ten years.

They took off from the school with their questionnaire forms and identifying cards, showing they were officially representing A-B Tech. Information requested in the survey pertained to those employees whose jobs required educational beyond high school but did not require a four-year degree. Assignments had been given on the businesses to survey. Every firm employing more than 50 people was visited and about twelve percent of 2,500 other representative businesses in Buncombe and Madison counties.

Jodi Graybeal and Joyce Parris, English instructors, visited all the barber and beauty shops on their list from Asheville to outlying areas, such as Mars Hill, Weaverville, Candler, Black Mountain, asking the business owners if training students at A-B Tech for these types of businesses would be beneficial.

The compiled answers were studied to see the feasibility of new programs. The participating instructors did not seem to mind this "extra" duty. At this time, instructors seemed to realize that if A-B Tech did not prosper, there would not be enough students to justify their employment.

This business-industry-community survey was part of what was used to create a long-range master plan for A-B Tech.

"Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute is currently taking measures to insure that its long-range employment training program anticipates any foreseeable changes in the local labor market and its needs. President Thomas W. Simpson said the time has come to take a long look into the future with the help of business and industry to update the institute's information on training and employment." [Mary Cowles, "Asheville Buncombe Tech Eyes Long-range Training Program," Asheville Citizen, April 21, 1974] In February of 1975, the 10-year master plan had been completed. The plans included new construction costing an estimated $9.5 million and contemplated increasing the present 129,000 square feet in instructional space to 290,000 during the 10-year period. The plan went beyond what could be accomplished in the next 10 years, but indicated the direction which both immediate and future construction programs would take.

"Views of both faculty and administration were given full consideration in arriving at building priorities included in the master plan. A series of 11 hearing were held by the Academic Affairs Committee in which information concerning facility needs was obtained from each division and administrative section. Out of this came a set of major priorities which parallel projections for new facilities for the 1974-1984 period.

"The summary in the master plan projects construction of four major buildings, a student center to cost an estimated $1.6 million; a $2 million learning resources center; an engineering technology center expected to cost $2.1 million and a general education building priced at $1.6 million, plus smaller construction programs, renovation and campus improvements." [Mary Cowles, "Growing Pains To Be Eased at School," Asheville Citizen, February 14, 1975]

The smaller construction projects included renovation of Birch, Maple, and Dogwood, and additional constructions of a warehouse, a maintenance building, a skills center, and a pedestrian bridge over Victoria Road.

All the careful plans were being made; then A-B Tech's world seemed to come apart. Most colleges have had some big crisis that changed their whole direction. Some of these crises have involved tremendous budget deficits, lack of community support, boards of trustees being divided by politics, bitter feuding among faculty members and administrators.

A-B Tech did not have any one of these. A-B Tech had a traumatic event on July 31, 1975. President Simpson, at age 48, "died enroute to an Asheville hospital of an apparent heart attack." [Asheville Citizen, August l, 1975]

Grieving administrators, faculty members, staff, and students did not know what would happen. Tom Simpson had been a strong leader, their leader, the one who had seen the first shovelful of dirt dug for the construction of buildings for Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center on Victoria Road.

Mr. Simpson had been born in Jackson County, North Carolina, and had been a resident of Buncombe County for twenty-one years. "He was a member of the Business and Industry Committee of the Chamber of Commerce, a charter member of the North Carolina Community College Presidents Association, a member of the board of visitors of WCU and a member of the American Vocational Association and the North Carolina Vocational Association. He was also a member of the board of directors of Mountain Manpower and the Buncombe County Manpower Council and a charter member of Old North State Chapter of the East Passage Club. He received the Phi Delta Kappa Distinguished Service Award from WCU in 1973. Mr. Simpson was an ardent trout fisherman, outdoorsman and conservationist." [Asheville Citizen, August 1, 1975]

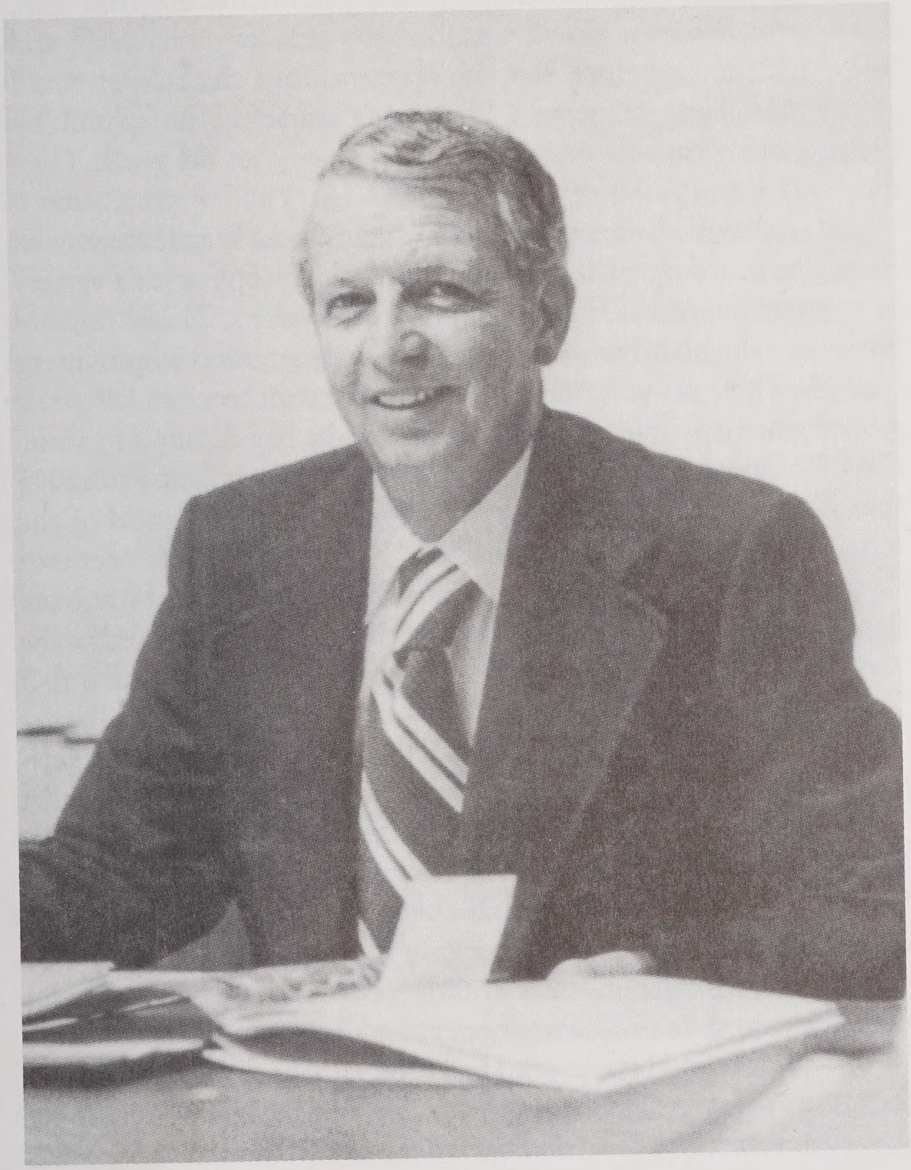
From WLOS television station on August 1, 1975, Arthur Whitesides expressed his editorial comments about Mr. Simpson: "Tom Simpson was a quiet, unassuming man, but a far cry from an ivory tower educator. He regarded his school as a pathway to meaningful jobs in business, industry, and the field of health. Thousands of young people regard him as being responsible for their present success. And thousands more have known larger pay checks because of courses he designed to upgrade their skills. He was never bound to his desk, but circulated in the Institute's halls and classrooms, chatting with students and showing a compassionate concern for the welfare. There are few men who could look back on their lives and find they have done as much for their community. Tom Simpson will be missed. It will not be easy to find a replacement of equal talent and compassion."

An editorial, entitled, "Thomas W. Simpson," was in the Asheville Citizen-Times, August 3, 1975: "Thomas W. Simpson had a disarming manner. Whatever the pressures exerted on him, he kept them to himself. He was friendly, gracious, ever the gentleman.

"Tom Simpson was a builder. He built Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute into one of the finest technical schools in the Southeast. In his service as president of the institution, he pioneered the development of the community technical institute. Educators from across the country came to Asheville to study his methods. The staff, a superb staff because he was skilled at judging talent, traveled far and wide to counsel staffs of similar institutions.

"In his own quiet way, Simpson did as much to build Asheville and Buncombe County as any individual in memory. A-B Tech provided the graduates and training facilities so vital to attracting industry. He was constantly selling the virtues of Western North Carolina." The editorial closed with a statement from Harry Clarke, president of Western Carolina Industries, "He was a fantastic man, a family man, a man who understood the region's needs."

Sara Morris felt that Mr. Simpson's most notable accomplishment was guiding the college toward accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. This achievement placed it in the ranks of other established educational systems. Many Western North Carolina community colleges got their starts as units administered by A-B Tech under his leadership.



Thomas W. Simpson, 1927 - 1975

Thomas Simpson had been the President of A-B Tech. He worked hard to make this school succeed, not for recognition for himself, which, when occurring, always seemed to surprise him, but for the Western North Carolina students he understood and knew had never before had the opportunities the school could offer. Mr. Simpson gave a long-range start for the school by picking other capable people who could carry on his goals. They did.

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute was fortunate in having its board of trustees filled with capable people with a variety of strengths in industry, government, professions, education, and business. The board must approve new programs and employment hirings. These people also aid in obtaining monetary funds for the school when possible -- perhaps even visiting legislators if feasible. Dave Robinson felt when he served on this board from 1973-1995 that it was a cohesive and cooperative group for the good of the school. Herb Coman, an original board of trustees member through the present, feels that over the years the board has been flexible and able to work together for what the school needed in the way of changes. However, this election for a new president for A-B Tech was not a planned change. It was the biggest task of all.

This board of trustees that included, in addition to Herb Coman and Dave Robinson, Gordon Greenwood, Ernest Mills, William Morgan, Herbert Hyde, Jack E. Cox, Edwin L. Higgins, Richard Wood, Jr., Joe B. Roberson, and John Erichson, Howard K. Harrison, wanted to see the school continue on the course it had taken since 1959. This was a community school and may not be the same for Western North Carolina students if someone who did not understand its people took over the leadership.

Harvey L. Haynes, who had originally been picked by Tom Simpson as counselor-coordinator in 1961 before becoming supervisor of instruction and then dean of instruction from 1968, acted as interim president of A-B Tech from August 4, 1975, until

September 17, 1975. He was unanimously elected President by the board of trustees.

"The search committee told the board members that Dr. Ben Fountain, present of the State Board of Education, had recommended six applicants for the A-B Tech president and that Haynes' name led the list." [Asheville Citizen, September 18, 1975]

In its November 1975 meeting, the board of trustees voted to rename the White Pines Administration Building to the Simpson Administration Building in honor of the school's first president. This is the only building on A-B Tech's campus named for a person. Mr. Simpson never thought a building should be named for a living person -- since one never knows what that person may do in the future. "Mountaineer wisdom" was always with Mr. Simpson, and he was the leader, or perhaps pioneer, in a "mountainous" project that still exists on Victoria road.

Mr. Haynes, who grieved for the loss of his friend, stated that it was hard to "fill Mr. Simpson's shoes." By this time Mr. Haynes felt that the curricula planning was basically in place and could be added to as needed but that more buildings were needed to develop the growth of programs.

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute truly saw some big changes from 1970 through 1975. The campus grew from 28 acres to 106 acres. Two new buildings, Rhododendron and Simpson Administration Building, made a total of six; plus four more buildings were added with the additional land acquisition. More students did attend, a rise of 1,025 to 1,662 in curriculum programs and a rise of 6,936 to almost 10,000 in the continuing education.

At the board of trustees meeting in November of 1975, Mr. Haynes summarized the past year of growth, showing a "total enrollment of 11,846 students enrolled in 535 classes with a total of 1,653,548 membership hours." Ray Bailey reported that the bids for construction of the new learning resources center would be released in February of 1976, with a completion date set for February 1977.

More programs had been developed, and more faculty and staff were hired. Sadness resulted because of the loss of Mr. Simpson, but there was also hope in continued leadership under Mr. Haynes.

Chapter 5

CHANGES ON VICTORIA ROAD FROM 1976 THROUGH 1987

On May 4, 1976, in a ceremony at the administration building at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute, the building was formally named the Thomas W. Simpson Administration Building by J. Herbert Coman, chairperson, on behalf of the A-B Tech's board of trustees. The dedication program included Dr. Joe Roberson's unveiling a bronze plaque bearing the likeness of the late President Simpson and the caption: "His leadership and devotion enriched the lives of countless individuals and he lives on through those whose lives he touched."

In 1977, "W. P. Griffin gazed at the two original buildings that grew into Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute and shook his head in wonder. `When we first put those two structures up in 1960,' he said, `we were scared to death we had over-built.'" [Mary Cowles, "AB Tech Has History of Spectacular Growth," Asheville Citizen, November 14, 1977] At the time of this statement, Mr. Griffin, superintendent of Asheville City Schools until 1977, had just attended his first meeting as a member of the A-B Tech board of trustees and had heard reports reflecting the spectacular growth of the institute; however, Mr. Griffin was originally on the board for Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center and why he included the "we." Mr. Griffin had just learned the fall enrollment for 1976 was 1,683 students enrolled in curriculum programs with a growth for fall of 1977 to 1,804 students enrolled in curriculum programs.

In 1978, the state legislature created a separate State Board of Community Colleges. At this time, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute had the option to apply for a name change to college. The school became Asheville-Buncombe Technical College, officially, on August 6, 1979.

On December 11, 1984, Asheville-Buncombe Technical College was reaffirmed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The looks of the campus changed tremendously during this period with new constructions going at a fast rate. A new learning resources center was finished as was a new skills center. The campus was bigger with land purchased that had four buildings on it. An impressive engineering building was constructed.

The big debate which caused divided feeling occurred in the fall of 1987 as to whether A-B Tech College would change its name to that of a community college or stay a technical college. The name change in 1979 from institute to college did not seem as significant as this one since even though already the students were able to transfer courses to a four-year school, this may offer programs for a 2-year transfer college. Many people felt this would be an excellent opportunity for area students while others wanted to keep the school as it was, a vocational and technical college offering its own skilled training completion programs.

Administration and Staff

Administration

Mr. Haynes, newly elected President on September 17, 1975, moved into a new office and continued the dedicated work he had done at A-B Tech for over a decade. He became the capable President the board of trustees expected him to be.

Harvey Haynes, President of A-B Tech, September 1975

"Harvey Lee Haynes probably knows more about technical education than any man in the two Carolinas. He literally wrote the book on it. He's been honored by the two states for his service." [Ted Carter, Asheville Times, March 1, 1979]

Sara Morris, former director of development, stated that construction of new facilities was the hallmark of the Haynes' years. She also pointed out he knew how to get funds from the General Assembly such as $3 million to build a "high tech center." Plus, he worked to get the St. Genevieve's property and knew how to use the acquired buildings profitably.

Jane Smith, former administrator, felt Mr. Haynes had the image of a president and succeeded in attaining his goal of "brick and mortar" to add to the school.

Dave Robinson, former board of trustee member and personnel manager of Square D, felt that Harvey always had the ability to control and handle critical situations. "He always made a good presentation for the school and was respected by industrial personnel."

Mr. Haynes credits many people with the success A-B Tech has had. "Many people contributed in different ways." He feels then Governor Sanford had the foresight to start the community college system, and state congressman Gordon Greenwood was instrumental in writing the bill. Locally, Mr. Cowan, board of trustees member, had much dignity and "opened doors" to congressmen; Woody Griffin from the Asheville City Board gave much support. Curt Ratcliff, when chairman of the County Board of Commissions, backed the school with financial resources in every way he could. He feels faculty members were strong and staff members, such as Jessie Goforth, were important. "These and others were responsible for the success of A-B Tech." [Interview, fall 1995]

Sara M. Morris became the first director of development at A-B Tech in 1984. As director, she was responsible for fund raising, public relations, advertising and marketing, planning, research and accountability to the General Assembly. Sara said she always preferred teaching, but when she was put into this position, she decided she would treat it as a challenge and do her best.

Jane G. Smith, who was the first hired employee as secretary to Mr. Simpson in 1959, had become a business instructor in 1977. In 1984, she became director of personnel and served until her retirement from the school in 1992.

Staff

Sherry Rhodarmer Cordell, hired in 1979, has been a secretary in various positions and is still serving at A-B Tech.

Student services kept expanding. James Drummond was hired as a counselor assistant in 1984. Connie B. Rice, who was a secretary from 1976, became director of admissions in 1984. Connie was a secretarial graduate from A-B Tech and continued at WCU to obtain a bachelor's degree in business administration.

Charles Wilson, A-B Tech's first, and for many years only, security officer, had been a custodian in Laurel Building in the mid-1970s. After the school purchased the Catholic property, some "break ins" started occurring. The administrators decided they needed a night watchman. Ray Bailey went to see Charlie and told him he'd been selected as the night watchman. Charlie replied, "Hell, you say!"

He was given a uniform and, since there was no security car, he did his patrols on foot. This did not last long since the school received a surplus old Cushman scooter and fixed it up for him to use.

Charlie Wilson, 1977; He finally had a patrol car.

Many students through the years learned that if they accidentally locked their keys up in their cars, Charlie with his coat hanger could quickly get the door opened. Times were different, and security was pretty much "laid back." Charlie would rather explain to students exactly why they could not park in that place instead of giving them a ticket.

Bruce Clyne, now serving as director of security, became chief of security in 1983 and has professionally trained personnel with impressive vehicles. Times change and call for different strengths; however, there are still personal "touches" at A-B Tech, such as a security guard, when walkways are icy, driving a handicapped student to classes across campus.

Buildings and Land Acquisitions

From 1976 through 1987, buildings were constructed plus others were acquired from two land purchases. A-B Tech's campus site was growing.

Buildings

In 1976, bids were awarded and construction was begun on a Learning Resources Center, which would house the library, audio-visual services, and guided studies. This center would move the library service from the overtaxed Birch Building where the library was in an approximate area of three regular classrooms. At this time, the new facility was being built across Victoria Road and seemed remote from the students' main activities. This two-level building contained 12,000 square feet. The cost for the structure was $450,000. The building was completed in October of 1977.

"The center will offer a variety of services to the students and faculty of A-B Tech, as well as to the community at large. The facility houses one of the most extensive technical libraries in Western North Carolina with a collection approaching 25,000 volumes and 350 trade and technical journals received on a regular basis.

"An audio-visual collection provides a variety of media including video cassettes, filmstrips, tapes, slides, kits, and other visuals to support the instructional programs. These materials, as well as the entire book collection, are utilized by public and state agencies, industries, businesses and private citizens in the local area.

"The resources of this facility to patrons are virtually unlimited since the staff has access to other library collections in the state through interlibrary loans and the State Library of North Carolina's IN-WATTS system. The library component of the center is supervised by Peggy Kyle. Richard B. English is responsible for providing audio-visual services." [Asheville Citizen, October 28, 1977] Kate Utter became coordinator of audio-visual services in 1981.

The learning resources center's interior comfort was described in the Asheville Times on March 2, 1978: There are hanging stairs and elevators. Everything is thickly carpeted. There are audio-visual aids, including a television layout. There are attractive nooks for students to relax and read the magazines or newspapers.

The library staff in 1985 began a "retrospective conversion" of the card catalog records to machine readable format in anticipation of creating a fully automated on-line catalog and circulation functions. In 1987, the college purchased DYNIX, INC., software to accomplish the automation of cataloging, circulation, and on-line catalog.

By the spring of 1978, a new building designed as a skills center was under construction. This center was designed for use by any industry in Western North Carolina or any industry contemplating settling in the region. This building was completed in 1979.

Skills Center, now Maple Building.

"Any industry which is changing or expanding is welcome to use our training. The real economic development which comes to a region is in expansion. It is great to see industry adding on brick and mortar," said Harvey Haynes. [Asheville Citizen-Times, January 18, 1987]

In the past few years A-B Tech had aided Rockwell International near Fletcher and RCA at Weaverville to train local people for their positions so that when the plant was ready, the workers were trained. Sara Morris said that this was the first skill center for new industry pre-employment ever built in North Carolina by a community college.

In 1979, The Buncombe County Board of Commissioners purchased another piece of Catholic property which had a 23,100 square-foot building on it. This was St. John Vianney Hall which first was used as the Buncombe County Board of Education offices while simultaneously serving as the classrooms for the law enforcement programs and the emergency medical services. This was renamed Hemlock Building. The Buncombe County offices moved out, leaving the building for A-B Tech's use. Hemlock currently houses the law enforcement programs, the emergency medical program, and the medical laboratory technician program.

Hemlock Building

By spring of 1978, the engineering technology building was on the "planning board."

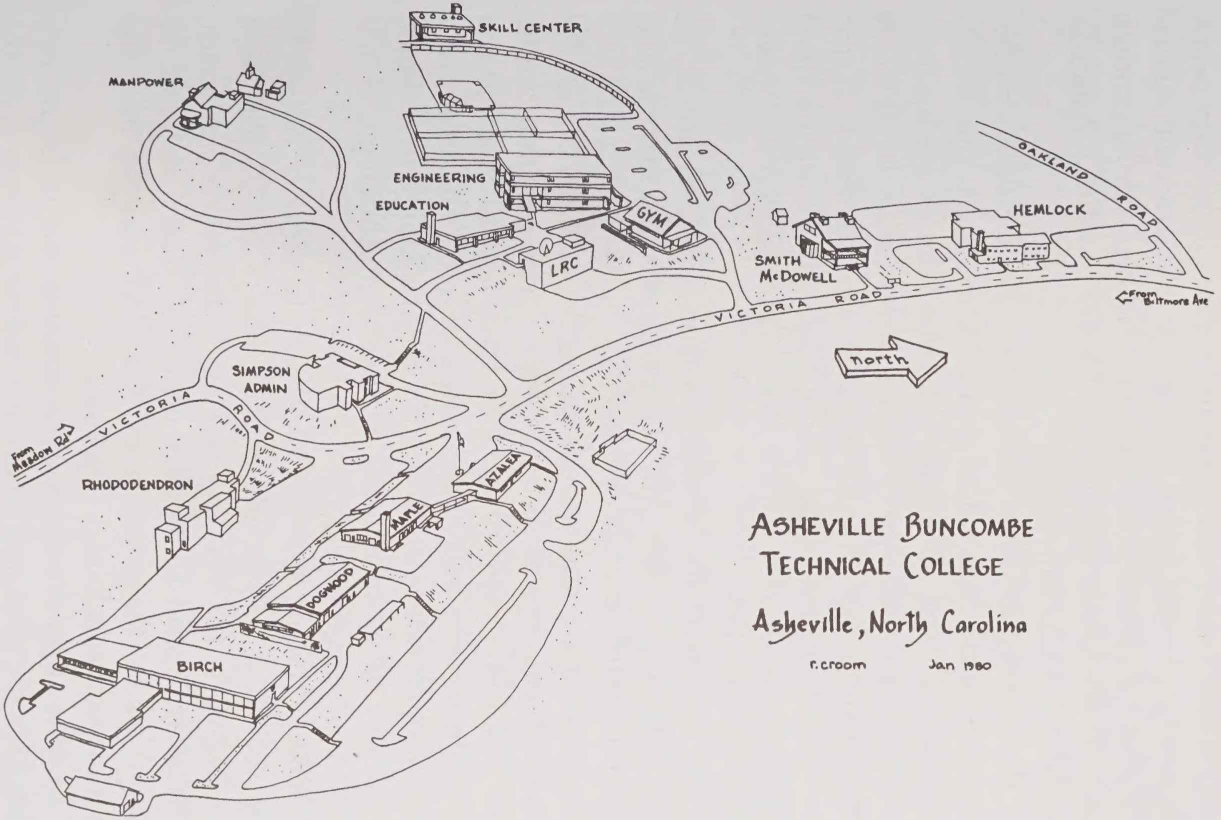
"The engineering center will provide facilities for expansion and perhaps enable A-B Tech to form closer ties with the four-year and graduate engineering and technical schools in North and South Carolina. When it is completed, the school will make available to the citizens and the industries of the area the most complex industrial education facilities this side of the industrial triangle in Raleigh." [Asheville Times, March 2, 1978]

"Completion of the new Engineering Technology Building on the north campus of Asheville-Buncombe Technical College early this year is expected to have a pronounced effect upon the engineering technology programs to be housed there, according to Harvey Haynes, A-B Tech's president." [Asheville Citizen-Times, January l, 1980]

Mr. Haynes pointed out that very few of the courses to be offered were duplicates of other institutions. The building, which cost $1,683,898 and contained 17,240 square feet, was about 75 percent finished in January of 1980. The funds for the building were financed entirely with local funds provided by the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners. For the first time all of the engineering programs offered by the college would be taught in a facility designed for their express needs. The building was designed and would house the two-year programs of chemical, civil, drafting and design, mechanical and electronic engineering technology curriculums.

Richard Croom, director of the engineering technology division at that time, saw the computer or calculator room, which would give students and faculty access to some of the more advanced programmable calculators, as one of the most significant features of the building.

By 1984, there were fourteen buildings on the A-B Tech campus.



SKILL CENTER
MANPOWER
ENGINEERING
EDUCATION
GYM
LRC
SMITH McDOWELL
HEMLOCK
OAKLAND ROAD
VICTORIA ROAD
From Biltmore Ave
north
SIMPSON ADMIN
From Meadow Rd
RHODODENDRON
AZALEA
MAPLE
DOGWOOD
BIRCH
ASHEVILLE BUNCOMBE
TECHNICAL COLLEGE
Asheville, North Carolina
r.croom
Jan 1980

A-B Tech Campus in 1984

In March of 1984, the Asheville-Buncombe Technical College officials asked "the local delegation to the General Assembly for $3.5 million to create an advanced technology center to train workers in tool design for regional industries and lobbied them to locate a proposed science and math high school on their campus." [Don DuBois, "Technology Center Funding," Asheville Citizen, March 13, 1984]

The two requests drew mixed views. The legislators wanted the science and math high school in the Asheville area but did not agree on the exact type. Governor Jim Hunt felt this needed to be a summer program similar to two other Governor's Schools where students live and study on a college campus for six weeks. Liston Ramsey wanted a year-round school that gifted students could commute to one or two days a week. (This school was never developed at A-B Tech.)

The legislators had doubts whether A-B Tech needed an advanced technology center. Mr. Haynes pointed out that the time was right for a program to be developed in tool design, "a vital link between engineering and manufacturing." No schools in the Southeast offered degrees in tool design. The program would combine A-B Tech's two-year technical training with a local liberal arts program to offer an undergraduate degree. He suggested a "cooperative program with Western Carolina University, which offers a degree in manufacturing engineering technology, would award the tool design degree."

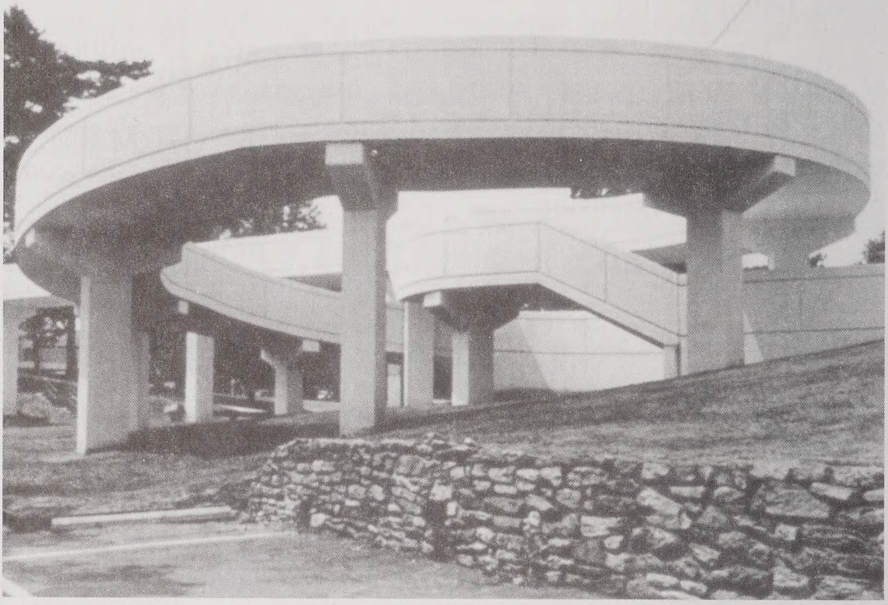
Senator Robert S. Swain, democrat, Buncombe, called the funding request a "pretty big order" since UNC-A had been pledged support for its engineering management program. Representative Martin L. Nesbitt, democrat, Buncombe, said he was "troubled by the prospect of A-B Tech turning over the program to another school." [DuBois]

Despite these drawbacks, construction was to begin on a "building to house what may be the first tool design program in the nation." [Merrell Gregory, Asheville Times, July 22, 1985] The new building would include tool design laboratories, a model shop for tool design, and eventually laboratories for training in computer aided design (CAD).

"The state General Assembly has allocated $3 million for the 3,000 square-foot building and equipment for its laboratories. It will be constructed as an addition to the campus's present engineering building, which was originally designed to accommodate such an extension.

"Haynes said the building design is now awaiting final approval from the state Department of Administration, and if that comes through as expected groundbreaking could be held as early as the first week in September." [Gregory, July 22, 1985] Mr. Haynes estimated the building should take about 18 months to complete. Also to be housed in the building would be classrooms and offices for the general education division, including English, mathematics, physics, sociology, and psychology. Mike Holcombe, who was chairperson of drafting and design, was to be in charge of the tool design program.

By January of 1987, more funding had been appropriated, "largely through the efforts of the Buncombe County delegation to the North Carolina General Assembly." [Asheville Citizen-Times, January 18, 1987] While the high-tech addition was being added to the engineering building, a pedestrian bridge across Victoria was being constructed to "tie" the campuses together for students but particularly as an aid for students in wheelchair and on crutches. Mr. Haynes had seem a student in a wheelchair come close to being hit as he tried to cross the busy street to the various buildings. This type of crossing was a necessity.



Pedestrian Crossing across Victoria Road.

Funding also had been appropriated at this time for a center to be located in Madison County near Marshall and the board of trustees was determining architects for it. This was to be a satellite school of A-B Tech which officials hoped to have opened by 1988.

In addition, architectural plans had been completed for renovations to the college's Maple and Dogwood Buildings which housed the seven vocational programs. These improvements resulted in these two buildings becoming one (Dogwood) with enlarged teaching areas.

Four buildings in 1987 were added when more land was purchased: Sharry Hall; Pinto Hall; Ivy Auditorium now used for avocational continuing education; Madonna Hall, currently occupied by nuns who used to teach at St. Genevieve's-Gibbons

Hall.

On September 23, 1987, the Asheville Citizen-Times announced, "Voters in Asheville and Buncombe County overwhelmingly approved bond issued Tuesday to pay for $6 million in improvements at Asheville-Buncombe Technical College." The improvements would include establishment of a day and evening child care center at the former Pinto Hall (now Poplar) on the St. Genevieve's-Gibbons Hall property and adapting Sharry Hall (now The Pines) for a continuing education center. On the existing campus it would pay for modernization of the Birch Building for the division of business and hospitality education.

Land Acquisitions

A-B Tech always wanted more adjacent land to its campus. The two pieces of property purchased for the school in 1979 and in 1987 were particularly valuable because of the usable buildings, already built for schools, on these.

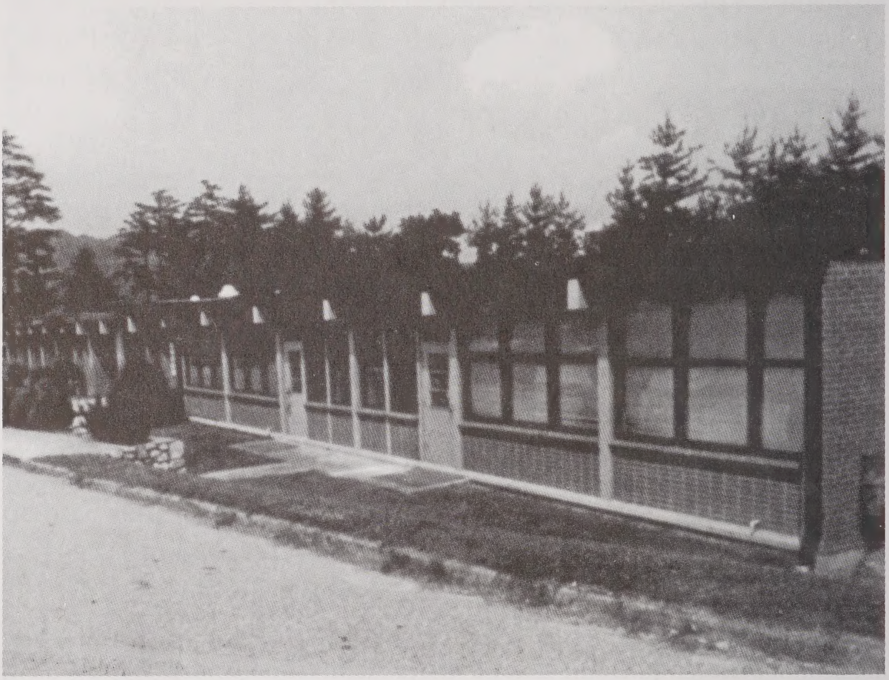
When St. John Vianney Hall was approved for purchase on January 8, 1979, the property included 7.47 acres, making the total campus 113.99. (This is the current Hemlock Building.)

When St. Genevieve's-Gibbons Hall officials announced its school would move and merge with Asheville Country Day, A-B Tech's board of trustees approved the purchase in May of 1987. School officials asked that the county include the proposed purchase in a bond referendum to be held in September of 1987. The purchase plan earned final approval on May 9, 1987, from county commissioners, who agreed to buy the school for $1.6 million if the bond referendum passed; if it failed they would buy the property over a four-year period for $1.7 million. [Ed Brackett, Asheville-Times, June 23, 1987]

Mr. Haynes and the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners talked with the officials from St.

Genevieve-Gibbons Hall who agreed to the price of $1.6 to $1.7 million for the 12.77 acres plus four building containing a total of 48,912 square feet.

The campus had now grown to 126.76 acres, over 100 acres larger than its start.



The Former Sharry Hall on the Campus of St. Genevieve's; Currently, The Pines Building.

Students

In 1978, there were 1,000 male students and 800 female students taking curriculum courses on Asheville-Buncombe Tech's campus. This total of students grew until in 1986, there were 3,009 in curriculum courses.

Harvey Haynes, president during these years, credited in 1979 this growth with a change of attitude about what Asheville-Buncombe Technical College had to offer for the students.

"`Parents now recognize that overall a kid wants to be happy, and if it takes four years that's fine, but if it just takes two, that's fine too. That attitude wasn't there a decade ago.'

"The most significant phenomenon is a statistic Haynes began studying six or eight years ago.

"He began counting the number of students at A-B Tech who already held degrees from four-year schools. At first it was a dozen or so, and last year there were 192, spread throughout the curriculums.

"`We didn't know quite what to make of that at first,' he said, `but we realized people go through one career for 10 years or so, then realize they can learn something new in two years.

"`That business of doing one thing for 45 years doesn't appeal to young people today. Older people may not understand this, but it's one of the exciting things I can imagine, and I think we'll have more of it in the future.'" [Asheville Citizen, September 1979]

In 1987, when the St. Genevieve-Gibbons Hall purchase was finalized, Mr. Haynes immediately turned Pinto Hall into a child care center and worked out an agreement with Buncombe county Child Development to manage the operation. This gave students, day or night, with young children a chance to bring their children to the campus with them and pick them up after classes. (The charge for this care was based upon the family's income.)

Programs and Faculty

An editorial, "County's Investment in A-B Tech Prudent," appeared in the Asheville Citizen on June 29, 1987: " Establishing the community college system was one of the best moves the state of North Carolina has ever made. The system had benefited millions of people over the years through its educational and enrichment programs.

"One of the system's best institutions is Asheville-Buncombe Technical College. It has grown by leaps and bounds during the 28 years of its existence -- and it's still going full speed ahead.

"The Buncombe County Board of Commissioners recognizes the institution's value to the Asheville area and has given its financial backing for many years. Its latest show of support comes in the form of an agreement to purchase the St. Genevieve-Gibbons Hall School campus for use by A-B Tech.

"It's obvious that A-B Tech has no intention of resting on its laurels. President Harvey Haynes says the institution is anxious to expand its programs and develop new fields of study. With the additional space, it will be able to do just that.

"A-B Tech's wide-ranging programs have been and continue to be highly important to the educational and economic development of Buncombe County. Only good can come from the institution's growth and expansion. The commissioners were wise to make the investment."

From 1976 through 1987, as more students came and more room was acquired, new programs and the number of faculty members increased. By 1984, there were 151 full time staff and faculty aided by 650 part time staff and faculty. There were still the six program divisions for curriculum students.

Allied Health Education

The allied health programs already established were graduating well-trained personnel. In 1980, a new program was developed.

On May 9, 1980, the two-year medical laboratory technology was accredited by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical laboratory Sciences. These types of accreditations are not just a formality. Site visits are made, procedures and training and equipment are studied.

The Asheville Citizen Times on April 25, 1982, announced that a new cooperative program in nursing had been developed by Asheville-Buncombe Technical College and Western Carolina University. "The Capstone Plan announced by A-B Tech President Harvey Haynes and WCU Chancellor H. F. Robinson establishes a joint agreement that enable associate degree nursing graduates of A-B Tech to complete the bachelor of science in nursing program at WCU in as little as two years."

Chancellor Robinson stated that the quality of the nursing program at A-B Tech and its graduates is impressive. He also felt that the agreement reached by the schools would be a model for the entire state to study.

In 1986, "Asheville-Buncombe Technical College's Associate Degree Nursing graduates recorded a 100 percent passing rate on the national registered nurse licensure exam. The 27 A-B Tech candidates achieved an above-average mean score of 2,201 on the test in July, with one student earning 3,173 points our of a possible 3,200. In the past five years, A-B Tech's nursing graduates have achieved an average passing rate of 94.6 on the exam which is used to certify college graduates as registered nurses in North Carolina and other states." [Asheville Times, September 29, 1986]

Nursing instructors hired during this time included Irma Allison in 1978, Mary Elizabeth Haney in 1981, Michelle Webb and Karen Baker in 1984.

Also in 1986, "Asheville-Buncombe Technical College officials have been notified that 100 percent of the 1986 graduating class in radiologic technology passed the American Registry Exam. Department chairman Henry Dawkins said this is the 10th class in the past 15 years to score a 100 percent passing rate." [Asheville Times, December 8, 1986]

The emergency medical science program at A-B Tech began in 1980. The emergency medical technician paramedic [EMT-P] did not develop in the United States until the early 1970s. At that time in a few states, the concept of advanced life support given by a non-physician at the scene of an acute illness or injury would be valuable.

The program at A-B Tech was started as "an effort to meet the needs for advanced prehospital care for the citizens of Buncombe and surrounding counties. The initial class primarily consisted of the then eligible employees from Buncombe County Emergency Services." [Program Overview, Department of Development]

Even by October 7, 1980, the Asheville Citizen reported that the new paramedic program at A-B Tech was off to a strong start for the 27 students enrolled. The instructor at this time was Linda Schmid. "The A-B Tech course is unique in that it provides entry and exit points at various levels of training in emergency care, allowing students with previous training to being the program at their respective levels. Memorial Mission has been made available for clinical experience for students and several hospitals and medical facilities in Western North Carolina have offered their assistance to Schmid and the paramedic program."

On April 5, 1982, Buncombe County EMS began providing paramedic coverage to its citizens. Revisions have to be made periodically because of the advances in emergency medicine. Clinton (Max) Queen, R.N., EMT-P, is the current chairperson and has been employed by the school since 1982. At this time J. Michael Witaszek was also hired in 1982, but was replaced by Ned H. Fowler, EMT-P, as an instructor in 1983. Mr. Fowler is still employed in this program.

Max Queen feels that some of the success in this department has been based upon the positive approach the instructors have toward students. Instructors try to accept "each student at the point we find them, recognizing that everyone will have the ability to learn, and structure the approach to each student accordingly. This approach is particularly adaptable in clinical situations. By not only teaching curriculum but also coordinating EMS continuing education, the students recognize that A-B Tech's EMS department is the foremost training site it Western North Carolina.

"Students are involved in hands-on lab activities, such as vehicle extrication, rescue from heights, search and rescue, emergency vehicle driving, hazardous material incidents, water rescue." ["Inform," February 1990, Development Office Newsletter, A-B Tech]

The Emergency Medical Science program at A-B Tech has served as a primary source of Emergency medical Technicians and Paramedics in the region.

M. Jerry VeHaun, director of Emergency Services, Buncombe County, wrote to Harvey Haynes, president of A-B Tech, on May 7, 1990: "Harvey, you have meant a tremendous amount to the agencies I work with daily, the Emergency Medical Service and fire personnel throughout the area, and we owe you many, many thanks. You have always supported our efforts by providing the programs needed to train personnel, and also supported our efforts in every was possible. Without this support, all emergency service agencies would be far behind their present status. Because of this support, we have emergency service personnel as highly trained as any in North Carolina."

Engineering Technology

The engineering division moved into its new $1.7 million building in 1980, and for the first time had all the instructors in the same facility in a building designed for its programs.

The high tech addition, which would house "the nation's only tool design program, an engineering technology program which prepares people to design and detail specific tools to produce products used in manufacturing, started offering programs in the evening curriculum in the fall of 1986. The day program was scheduled to start in the fall of 1987. Larry Boyd, in 1986, was appointed as the "lead" tool design instructor.

Business Education Division

In the business division two new options were added. In 1978, a banking and finance option was developed to train students with special courses to enable them to be trained for positions in banks, credit unions, and finance companies. With these options, required elective courses are taken in addition to the regular business curriculum courses. In 1982, the sixth option was added to the business education division's general program: manufacturing resources planning. This course was designed to introduce the student to the different functions involved in manufacturing and selling a product. At the time of its development, it was the only program in the nation. The options were designated as programs in 1978.

General Education Division

Until the fall of 1978, general education had never offered a program in its division but only offered support courses for the other divisions. The criminal justice program, law enforcement technology in 1985, started at this time and was placed in the general education division. The program was held in the Azalea Building until the spring quarter of 1979 when it moved to Hemlock Building where it is still located. Changes have been made in this program as laws and technologies change. David

Warren was hired as the department chairperson of criminal justice/law enforcement technology and still serves in this position. Instructors have included Dennis Bressert, hired 1981; George Knox, hired 1985; Monte D. Clampett, hired 1994. This program offers an associate degree.

From 1971, a basic law enforcement training course had been taught in the continuing education at A-B Tech. This was designed for law enforcement officers who, by legislation, at that time had to receive training. When the criminal justice program was created, the basic law enforcement training was added to this as a separate certificate course, and the training program was offered two or three times a year. This course has served as the main source of entry-level law enforcement officers in the Western North Carolina area ever since the course began in 1971. This includes only one course, divided into 33 topics, with no other course requirements. The basic content is not controlled at the college level but awards elective credits for career officers. Instructors for this course included Phillip Jamieson for one year in 1989, then, in August of 1990 Scott Bissinger, who had been hired as a faculty member in the criminal justice program in 1988 became its director, now called law enforcement training. This course currently awards certificates to about a hundred graduates per year.

These two programs were moved from the general education division to the allied health and public service division in 1993.

More instructors were added to the general education division from 1976 through 1987. David Warren was hired in 1978 as chairperson of criminal justice; Ralph Leonard, Jr., was hired in 1978 for biology and upon his leaving, W. Michael Gray was hired in 1981; Laurie S. Wilkie was hired in 1979 for mathematics and physics; Roy James (Jim) Tweed, Jr., was hired in 1980 for mathematics; Hamilton Gregory was hired in 1979 for English as was Sandi Jenkins in 1986. With the exception of Mr. Leonard, all of these instructors are still serving at A-B Tech. Hamilton Gregory has made a name for himself in oral communications since he wrote the book on it. Celia Miles co-authored a book on technical report writing. A-B Tech has been honored by these two faculty members with exceptional abilities who were chosen by a major textbook company for publication.

Celia H. Miles became department chairperson of the English, psychology, and sociology department in 1976 after Maxie Welch resigned from this position. Celia still serves as the chairperson of the English and foreign languages department. Celia always believed that there should be uniformity in the content of courses but that teaching techniques should not be restrained.

In 1976, a guided studies program was added to the library resources center. These courses were later moved from the center to Laurel Building. Guided studies was transferred to the general education division in 1983.

Hotel/Restaurant Education Division

Two new faculty members were hired in the hotel/restaurant division during 1976 through 1987: Gary Scwartz in 1984 and Timothy S. Rice in 1986. Gary and Tim replaced Jeff Myron and Jordan Maynard who had left.

Vocational Education Division

The programs in the vocational division stayed the same during these years, but some changes were coming. Architectural plans had been completed for renovations to vocational training facilities. This was funded primarily by Buncombe County. The improvements would enlarge teaching areas for each of the seven vocational programs. Plans had also been made for training in more advanced applications which would turn some of these programs into two year courses. [Asheville Citizen-Times, January 18, 1987]

Plans for Changes in Programs

New curriculums in the past had been created based upon needs expressed by business and industry.

In 1985, in an interview with staff writer, Barbara Blake, Asheville Citizen, Sara Morris, the director of development, stated that people from the community would come to the college and say that they needed programs in a specific area. When that came to us, we would survey the market and determine if these did seem feasible for A-B Tech. In this same article, "Tech School Grads Vital to Mountain Area," Robert F. Burgin, director of Memorial Mission Hospital, stated that the hospital would not be able "to sustain" itself without the school's allied health programs. "They're very valuable to us. They're one of the best in the state -- maybe the best." George Pressley, who was plant manager at Square D Company, stated, "If A-B Tech weren't here, it would create quite a hardship for us in regard to recruitment of technical people and technicians."

Since changes occur in job performance as well as available jobs in any area, A-B Tech in early 1987 was studying the existing programs and planning to see if new programs needed to be developed. "In addition to recommendations from groups external to the college [such as community leaders], a committee of administrators, faculty and students will simultaneously evaluate internal strengths and weaknesses." [Asheville Citizen-Times, January 18, 1987]

Equipment throughout the college continued to be upgraded to reflect changes in technology. Particularly computer systems had to be replaced, such as in office education and business computer programming; and in engineering and vocational fields a computer-aided design lab, robots, and CNC equipment had started being used.

Continuing Education

"The primary purpose of A-B Tech is to serve as an essential member of the regional development team. It is especially concerned with manpower for economic development, being always careful to keep its courses and curriculum in the main stream of community needs. However, the institute does not limit itself to the development of occupational skills alone. It strives to develop the total individual for the good of that individual." [Asheville Times, March 3, 1978]

Continuing education from 1976 through 1987 kept seeing more people interested in taking special courses -- 10,000 people in the 1970s to 17,000 - 18,000 by 1987. This "by-product sometimes threatens to swamp the school with sheer numbers of students and no place to put them. It's an immensely popular department called `continuing education.' Subjects taught run the whole gamut -- courses such as electrical apprenticeship, quilting, solar heating, crocheting, "powder puff" mechanics. Continuing education courses that have proved to be popular include breadmaking, religion, ground school for aviation, bricklaying, income tax, speed reading, interior design, ceramics, photography. ... Last year [1986] approximately 535 different courses were taught." [Asheville Times, March 3, 1987]

Continuing education had to keep adding to its staff to keep up with the diversity and the numbers of students.

In 1976, the subdivisions in the continuing education included its various avocational courses plus adult basic education, the GED programs, and the manpower development programs.

At this time Ray E. Sawyer was director of extension, Lowell Smith was still dean of continuing education, and Arthur

M. Taylor was director of adult basic. Jean Clayton became director in 1979. The Manpower Development Program's director was William G. Shetley; instructors were Marilyn K. Bollinger and Burney Hay Gardner; Virginia C. Kirkland was in certification-outreach with Hardy H. Mapp, outreach worker; Willa Bella Rowe, job director.

The title for the manpower development program became human resources development (HRD) by 1978. Renee' Reich was an instructor at this time. In 1983, Jayne Mignogno was coordinator/job developer. In 1984, Elizabeth R. Heaton became the coordinator/job developer of HRD. One such project developed at this time included a program developed by A-B Tech and Hillhaven Rehabilitation Center so that trained people could be prepared for work in area rest homes. As customary, the general preparation was given at the school and the specific skills were developed under guidance at the Center.

"The HRD, the only state-funded program of its kind in the nation, has been in existence since 1973. It seeks to help chronically underemployed and unemployed people get and keep jobs. They begin the program by taking pre-vocational classes in which they learn basic job hunting skills. This program also works on building self-esteem and motivation in people who may have had very little of either." [Merrell Gregory, "Program Offers Help to the Underemployed," Asheville Times, June 5, 1984.

Another part of the program is adult basic education, perhaps a student's attaining his or her GED.

The program served an estimated 33,000 students state wide from 1975 through 1984. In 1984, about 150 students were being trained in the HRD program.

Small Business Center

Asheville-Buncombe Technical College opened a new small business center in October of 1986 to help new and existing small business operators.

"A-B Tech became the first institution in the mountains to join the state small business center program with a $50,000 appropriation from the General Assembly. The annual appropriation will be used to pay salaries and to buy equipment for the program." [Asheville Citizen, October 20, 1985]

The program was designed to offer tax, legal, and marketing advice in order to help people from failing in business.

The first director of the small business center was Wayne Purcell. He was followed by Harry Ponder who is the current director.

In 1989, A-B Tech, WCU, and UNC-A joined efforts to create a Joint Business Development Center in Asheville at The Pines Continuing Education Center on the A-B Tech campus. This united the small business assistance services already provided with consulting provided by the three schools.

In addition to seminars being held, individual consultations are made. Mr. Ponder feels that planning is the most important thing for people wanting to open a small business. Much studying has to go into things such as is the service or product something people will buy. Also, Mr. Ponder feels, that most people go into a business without realizing how much money it will take to get it started.

One instance of the type of help an individual can receive was in 1991 when Harry Ponder gave technical assistance to Wendy Taylor when she wanted to open a new business. Taylor studied the market and got a list of suppliers, with advice from Mr. Ponder along the way, even for things such as name, location, hours. [Asheville Citizen-Times, September 22, 1991]

The center sponsors such seminars as taxes, recordkeeping and accounting, understanding cash flow, successful entrepreneurship, crimes against business, small claims court, bad checks, how to start your own business. The opening of the continuing education facility, The Pines, helped to improve some programs that had not really had the proper places to meet previously, such as the compensatory education program for mentally challenged students. This program served 50 students at a time.

Another New Name???

By 1981, the North Carolina community college system had become larger than the state's university system. In fact, it was the third largest community college system in the United States. At this time, the community college system was still under the control of the State Board of Education, which also had to "oversee" grades kindergarten through 12th grade. However, the system of community colleges was waiting its release to the newly created State Board for Community Colleges and Technical Institutes.

The community college system had become very important, with one out of every ten people in the state receiving some kind of instruction from the system every year. One consideration coming up was should the schools start offering liberal arts courses, such as physical education. Already nearly half of the state's campuses had converted from technical institutes to community colleges and had added college-oriented courses, even though the state's system was still better known for its programs in vocational training for industries.

Would A-B Tech stay as Asheville-Buncombe Technical College, become Asheville-Buncombe Community College, or become Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College?

Many years from now, people will wonder why anybody cared what the name was for the school on Victoria Road. The programs would be staying the same, still vocational, still technical, just adding a few other courses -- or would they stay the same?

In 1959, the school had started as an industrial education center. The people who had devoted many years and years of their service to the school were proud of the successes and achievements of their students. However, changes had been made, and students from the technical programs through the years had been transferring courses to four-year colleges, but the actual name change to a community college seemed to indicate a big change in its direction.

Many people were concerned. Many people were afraid the original purpose would be lost and that the school, instead of keeping its own identity, would become just another "feeder" school for four-year universities. The situation was probably as close to the famous "crisis" that most schools face and write about than any other situation that had occurred.

By 1982, a "capstone" agreement with Western Carolina University had been made for the associate nursing program. Then, in 1983, Mars Hill and A-B Tech had joined forces to expand academic opportunities for students at both schools. A-B Tech graduates would be able to transfer to Mars Hill as juniors and attain bachelor's degrees by taking general education classes and upper-level courses related to their major fields of study from A-B Tech. The courses included in this agreement included hotel and restaurant management, secretarial science, criminal justice, manufacturing resources management, chemical engineering, civil engineering, drafting and design, electronics, mechanical engineering, dental hygiene, nursing, radiologic technology, medical laboratory, and emergency medical service. In short, nearly all the technical programs. These were looked upon as more or less "reverse majors" because classwork in the major field would be completed at A-B Tech. [Asheville Citizen-Times, April

16, 1983]

On October 27, 1987, the Asheville Times reported, "Asheville-Buncombe Technical College's days may be numbered." This article explained that a bill passed by the General Assembly allowed technical colleges and institutions to become community colleges with the approval of their board of trustees, county commissioners, and State Board of Community Colleges.

It was now up to the board of trustees who had to decide before January 1, 1988, or lose the chance until college transfer programs were established.

Even at this date, Harvey Haynes, A-B Tech president, knew the mixed feelings on campus and was having a hard time himself making up his mind. He stated, "Right now, I'm not sure how I feel." [Asheville Times, October 27, 1987]

On November 3, 1987, the Asheville Citizen stated "A-B Tech Board OKs New Name." Perhaps it was hard for anyone who did not understand the history of the school to understand the dilemma, since the article said, "The name-change isn't that drastic. It only adds one work to the institution's title." In a straw poll conducted earlier among the full time faculty and staff, only nine voted for the name which the board of trustees chose, which was Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. More of the people on campus, fifty-seven, were for the name to be Asheville-Buncombe Community College, while twenty-six were in favor of no name change at all.

The article quoted Sara Morris, director of development, who said, "The name change does not alter the mission of A-B Tech, but it does allow us to conduct a feasibility study on offering transferable programs of students who want to attend a senior college or university."
The board had voted unanimously for the feasibility study.

A-B Tech was changing -- many were reluctant to let go of its past. They felt there was no need to "talk the issue to death";

they were just sorry the inevitable time had to come. The students of the area needed a way to transfer to four-year schools. A-B Tech had to meet their needs -- as it had done since 1959. People who did not understand the beginnings of the school did not, and perhaps never will, perceive why the technical denotation stayed in the title. It is a proud title; it cannot be shortened because it shows the magnitude of what the school was before and does encourage now. There is still a variety.

Chapter 6

ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE, 1988 - 1995

From the years 1988 through 1995, A-B Tech has had many changes in the appearance of the campus itself. Some buildings look entirely different from the originals, such as the "A" building (now Azalea), the enlarged Library Resource Center, the combined "B" and "C" buildings (now Dogwood). A new building sits in Madison County as a satellite of A-B Tech. Land has been added to make a campus of 144 acres on Victoria Road. More students keep attending.

In 1990, A-B Tech had a change in Presidents. Harvey Haynes retired after being President since 1975. K. Ray Bailey, not a "newcomer" to the school, became the third president.

Each program's effectiveness was studied. Changes occurred in the programs being offered. As the new name denoted, A-B Tech Community College soon expanded its mission. More faculty members, full time and adjunct, and staff members were hired to meet new demands. Restructuring of the long-time six divisions was accomplished.

In December of 1994, A-B Tech was reaffirmed for a 10-year period by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

Plans are still being made for the future of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College.

Buildings, Renovations, and Land Acquisition

From 1988, the looks of the campus on Victoria Road were changing because of new buildings, renovations, and one more piece of acreage purchased.

Buildings and Renovations

The emphasis during this time shifted from building new facilities to renovating the older structures. On February 3, 1988, the Asheville Citizen announced that A-B Tech officials approved actions "aimed at starting $5.3 million in renovations and expansions to campus buildings."

Opened in 1968 as the fourth building on the campus, Birch Building, which houses the programs in business and hospitality education, was to receive a $1 million renovation. The library facilities had been moved from Birch to the new Learning Resource Center in 1977. The general education instructors moved from upstairs in Birch to downstairs when the library moved out. The general education instructors had moved on out in 1987 when the "high tech" addition had been added to the engineering building (later named Elm). During the renovations to Birch, the business and hospitality instructors with their classes had to shift into rooms all over the campus, often having to change buildings each hour. Students were used to this, but these instructors shook their heads as they dashed around, declaring Birch would be nice -- when it finally was finished.

In February of 1988, the board of trustees also approved $l million in renovations for the education building, later named Laurel. (This building was the one that been the classroom building for Asheville Catholic High School.) An addition to this building included an auditorium/meeting room. As renovations were made, the original brick buildings' exteriors became "standardized" to match the Simpson Administration Building.

Also approved at this time was $800,000 for an addition to the gymnasium and a request for $1.5 million addition to the

Learning Resource Center. These were in addition to the renovations for Maple (second building on campus) and Dogwood (third building on campus) which would modernize the vocational areas and join the buildings as one.

For all the projects at A-B Tech, the General Assembly had appropriated $3.9 million, and the remainder from proceeds of the $6 million bond referendum which was held on September 22, 1987. [Asheville Citizen, February 3, 1988]

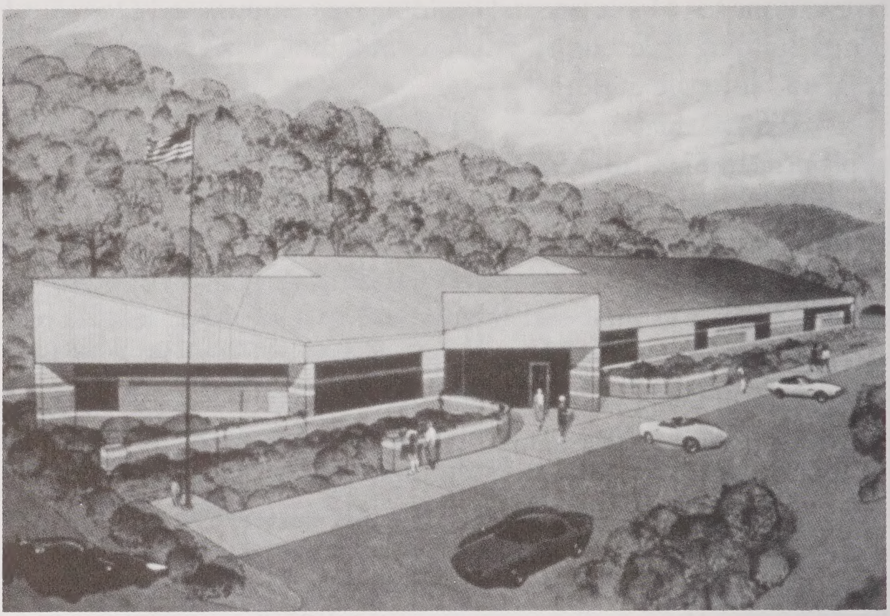
The community was still supporting the endeavors going on at A-B Tech, and the bond referendum passed. Most people had already forgotten about wondering in 1961 what those two new buildings would be used for on Victoria Road.

The new Madison Campus of A-B Tech was dedicated in January of 1990. The main building on the $1.2 million Madison County campus was named for Representative Liston B. Ramsey, democratic house speaker from Madison during the 1980s. Mr. Ramsey was the one who helped to make the satellite possible. The 19,000-square-foot building, located on 4,58 acres, contains four classrooms, two shop areas, a 100-seat auditorium, a conference room and a student lounge.

Mr. Ramsey felt this could become one of Madison County's leading economic resources. County Commissioner Reese Steen stated, "We are starting work on our industrial park and this gives us a place to train workers." [David Nivens, "New Madison Campus of A-B Tech Dedicated," Asheville Citizen-Times, January 19, 1990]

"It's empty shop spaces stand waiting to train industrial workers. Its newly furnished classrooms call out to any adult who wants to learn to read." [Nivens]

A-B Tech has served Madison since the college opened in 1959 and the operation has grown from a satellite at Marshall Elementary in 1984 with classes at Madison High. Classes first scheduled for the building included basic adult education and instruction for the GED examination.



Drawing of the Proposed Madison County Campus.

In 1992, a new ten-year master plan was approved so that specific improvements could be made. Again, the physical improvements could be realized only with the passage of bond referendums.

In April of 1993, the community voted for a local bond issue that provided $7.5 which ensured an addition to Elm Building and the expansion of the Learning Resources Center.

In September of 1993, the board of trustees approved for A-B Tech's campus one new building, two additions to buildings, and one renovation. A public services occupation building would be built for $3.2 million. The additions were $1.5 million for additional allied health programs' classrooms in the Rhododendron Building and $75,000 to add space for a central printing and mail distribution center in the Chestnut Building, which currently houses plant operations. The renovation was for Sunnicrest, $225,000, to provide facilities for continuing education. In November of 1993, the statewide referendum for the community college system was passed. This referendum allotted $5 to A-B Tech so that the plans approved in September could become a reality.

Another improvement project was planned in February of 1994: a science, science laboratory, and classroom tower at $5 million.

Land Acquisition

The administrators at A-B Tech for quite some time had been interested in another piece of property adjoining the campus, not only because it would add more building room if needed but also it would be a completion for the appearance of the campus. Plus, there was a historic house on the property which would give A-B Tech three such places -- the Smith McDowell House built in the 1840s, the Connally home built in the 1880s, and this one, "Sunnicrest," built as a "cottage" by George W. Vanderbilt in the early 1900s (probably 1905).

This purchase became a reality when the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners agreed on Tuesday, April 17, 1990, to buy nearly 17 acres for Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College for $1.2 million. This property is to the north and east of the Victoria Health Care Center and included three separate parcels owned by John and Annye Holt, by Split Rail Properties, and by Lee and Ellen Radeker, who owned "Sunnicrest," which was purchased with six acres of land by C. W. Radeker and wife on May 10, 1911, from George Vanderbilt. "Sunnicrest" with its garage was the only structure on this 17 acres at the time of purchase.

"County Finance Director Jim Roach said after the meeting the property would likely be bought under a lease-purchasing agreement, with the county deeding the property outright to the college in four or five years." [Ed Brackett, "County Commissioners To Buy 16 Additional Acres for A-B Tech," Asheville Citizen, April 18, 1990]

Ray Bailey at A-B Tech commented. "We are obviously delighted. We feel the purchase will greatly enhance the college in the long term." [Brackett]

Students

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College had the fastest growing enrollment in the state's community college system over 1990. The number of students at A-B Tech had jumped 28 percent over the enrollment of 1989. Ray Bailey, President, said the rise was "driven by a new program that allowed students to take two years at A-B Tech and then transfer to a four-year college, by the success of the electronics program, and by a recession that was forcing people to seek an employment edge." [Asheville Citizen-Times, November 5, 1991]

Mr. Bailey also stated that the increases would play a large role in the projections made during the school's master plan which would include a 10-year plan on how many students would come and what kind, and what the college must do to accommodate them.

The curriculum enrollment has continued to grow from 5,566 in the 1990-91 school year to 6,598 in the 1994-95 school year. The extension enrollment was 12,928 in 1990-91 and has declined to 11,979 in 1994-95.

On A-B Tech's campus, there is a blend of all types of students -- a literal microcosm of the United States from the ones who are learning to read for the first time, to the ones who are planning for skilled jobs, to the ones whose main dreams are to work in a health profession, to the ones who want to become physicists, teachers, college professors. The average age of all college students is currently 28.9 years old, with ten percent more females than males. A little over eighty percent of the students enrolled are from Buncombe and Madison Counties.

No one is sure that a school with the purpose to serve all needs for all students can survive. A-B Tech is 37 years old, but other schools on Victoria Road have lasted longer and no longer exist. The success probably depends upon the ones who work at A-B Tech since the various students depend upon them in charge for leadership, education, guidance, and cooperation.

Students have a variety of reasons for attending A-B Tech.

Bill Brown, who was a member of the first class of college-trained tool designers, graduated from A-B Tech on August 26, 1989.

"This degree will be a great help for me in pay and opportunity," said Brown, who had attended the school to take machine shop, left school, then decided he wanted to stay in the machine field and returned. [David Nivens, "A-B Tech Graduates Tool Makers," Asheville Citizen-Times, August 27, 1989]

Tool designers create gauges and tools used in manufacturing.

"Sometimes it is more difficult to find a good tool designer than a Ph.D.," Richard L. Daugherty, a member of the State Board of Community Colleges and general manager for IBM's Research Triangle Park operation, said when the program began. [Nivens]

Brown added that there are so few designers available because there has never been a school to train them. He felt that few young people knew much about the program. [Nivens]

Doris Williams Avery was the first black woman to graduate from A-B Tech's carpentry and cabinetmaking class. Avery, a single mother of three sons, stated, "I went to A-B Tech to get my GED since in anything now you have to have it, so I figured I was going to do something with my life and that was one step." [Nancy Marlowe, "I Knew I Could," Asheville Times, August 28, 1989] After this success, Ms. Avery took some other steps, she enrolled in cake decorating and landscaping courses. She obtained employment with a construction company and learned to lay brick and to drive an asphalt compactor. She then started the carpentry classes at A-B Tech, walking every day and carrying her toolbox, books, and pocketbook. "On rainy days, I had to arrange things so I could carry my umbrella. But I did it. Sometimes it got hard, and I would cry because I didn't think I could do it. People tried to discourage me at times, but I just walked right over them and kept on going." At graduation time, she felt fulfilled and was proud of herself. She said that successfully completing the course has given her more self-confidence and made her more independent so that she would be able to provide for herself and her sons. "I don't have to wait around for anybody to do anything for me." [Marlowe]

"At the age when most of his peers think about taking it easy, 63-year old William Shores of Buncombe County decided to hit the books." [Paul Johnson, "Pappy's Diploma," Asheville Citizen-Times, June 8, 199l] Shores had retired four years previously after working in the textile industry. He had not completed high school when he started working. When he retired, he decided to get that high school diploma. Mr. Shores achieved his goal. "I was determined to get it," he said and told that the younger students gave him the nickname "Pappy." He enjoyed studying with them and would encourage them, telling them they could make it if he could.

Another GED graduate, Helen McDowell, had always wanted to work with children and was able to work as a teacher's aide with kindergarten students after getting her certificate. [Asheville Citizen-Times, September 18, 1991]

In 1991, business students from A-B Tech won first place in the "Partnership in Business" category during the national finals at the Phi Beta Lambda National Leadership Conference in Anaheim, California. The winning entry was a student survey of businesses conducted to determine educational and work experience requirements for different positions. A-B Tech students Rosemary Davis, Jamie Maynor, and David Zibell made the oral presentation during the final competition. The students earlier had won state competition in order to be able to compete in the finals. Student members have been state finalists for the past six years, placing in the top 10 nationally for the past five years. They have won three first-place honors in national competition in recent years. [Asheville Citizen, August 7, 1991]

In 1994, the Phi Beta Lambda Chapter won a national first place award in the National Leadership Conference. Also, in 1994, two teams from the culinary technology program won gold medals at the Southeastern Restaurant Hospitality and Food Service Show.

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College received word in December of 1991 that 100 percent of the 1991 graduates of the medical laboratory technology associate degree program passed the American Society of Clinical Pathologists Board of Registry certification examination. "Department Chairperson Laura West said that almost all of the graduates of the five years have achieved the 100 percent pass rate since the program was started in 1977, with 95 percent of the graduates passing." [Asheville Citizen, December 11, 1991]

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College was notified that 100 percent of the 1991 practical nurse graduates passed the North Carolina Licensure Examination in January of 1992. "The average passing rate for all graduates of North Carolina community colleges on the state licensure examination was 97 percent." [Asheville Citizen, January 15, 1992]

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College was notified that 100 percent of 1992 graduates from three medical programs had passed their certifying examinations. These included the radiologic technology students, the medical technicians, and the practical nursing. [Asheville Citizen, February 24, 1993]

Since its beginning in 1959 through the fall of 1995, A-B Tech has graduated a total of 11,635 students from its curriculum programs.

Administrators and Staff

Administrators

From the beginnings of the establishment of technical institutes, the local board of trustees had the big "say so" in picking their presidents. In February of 1988, Bob Scott, president of the 58-campus community college system, had proposed that local boards submit three names for selection to fill a vacancy for president. "The state board would choose one of the nominees or reject all of them." [David Nivens, "A-B Tech Trustees oppose State Selection," Asheville Citizen, February 24, 1988]

Resolutions had already been filed against this procedure by other community colleges when Talmadge Penland, chairperson of A-B Tech's Board, voiced his disapproval. "Up until now, it has been up to the local trustees to pick a candidate. Then, the state board would either approve or disapprove. We have one of the best community college systems in the state, and we see no need to change. Local boards should have control." [Nivens, February 24, 1988] Mr. Penland said that some colleges had problems with administrators and faculty members' disagreeing and some schools had "phantom" classes being created. He felt problems such as these made the state board want to have more control in being able to fire college presidents. Mr. Penland felt local boards could be the controller more effectively.

The board of trustees felt it had made a wise choice thirteen years earlier in choosing Harvey Haynes as A-B Tech's president on September 17, 1975, after the death of Mr. Simpson. They had seen the campus and buildings and programs grow under Haynes' leadership. Mr. Haynes was a "local" educator who was familiar with Western North Carolina's students and industries. Plus, he had been with and understood the technical colleges' concept and was considered a leader in North and South Carolina. Before being president at A-B Tech he was even relieved of duties for three month's at the request of the head of N. C. Department of Community Colleges to design a program of instruction and present it to all presidents of the community college system of N. C. concerning industrial development. He served as chairman of the State Curriculum Development Committee and as chairman of Standard III educational programs.

In June of 1989, Mr. Haynes was honored at a special medallion awards ceremony at the National Conference of Leadership 2000 in San Francisco to receive the award for leadership in the community college field. Mr. Haynes was chosen by other community college presidents.

At Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College's graduation held on August 24, 1989, Mr. Haynes announced his retirement as being president, effective at the end of June of 1990. "During his tenure, the college has seen its enrollment exceed 20,000 students and employment top 900. The college's budget is in excess of $20 million." [Asheville Citizen-Times, August 26, 1989]

As word of Mr. Haynes' retirement spread, he started

Harvey Haynes, President of A-B Tech, 1975 - 1990 receiving letters from various government officials thanking him for service to A-B Tech and the community. From Terry Sanford, April 3, 1990, then United States senator: "Your dedication to education and expertise in guiding the development and diversification of this institution have been invaluable assets to North Carolina and its citizens. It has been a privilege and an honor to have known and worked with you throughout my years of public service." W. P. Griffin, former superintendent of Asheville City Schools, May 21, 1990: "I want to join with your many friends in thanking you for your years of outstanding service. Your contributions will long be remembered." Gordon H. Greenwood, then state representative, May 23, 1990: "No community college has enjoyed greater success or made more progress than A-B Tech under your intelligent and dedicated leadership." Robert W. Scott, president of N. C. System of Community Colleges in 1990: "During the years, you have surveyed the needs of your area and tailored the program to meet those needs." James G. Martin, governor of North Carolina in 1990: "The entire college has seen phenomenal economic development on the campus and also in the region during your tenure."

During Mr. Haynes' administration, major new construction and renovations took place. The school's curriculum expanded. In 1990, there were thirty-two career programs and a college transfer program. [Asheville Times, May 9, 1990] Curriculum enrollment almost doubled during the 15 years he served as president, from 1,662 in 1975 to 3,200 in the fall of 1989.

Mr. Haynes feels his accomplishments were land acquisition and construction of buildings. "The school had to grow to meet the needs of Western North Carolina students." He also feels that A-B Tech has been accepted as a school of higher education. When he decided to retire, he felt he had been through the first two stages of development: the curriculum planning and the building. He felt it was time for him to leave, but he never stops missing the people he worked with. [Interview, fall 1995]

On March 22, 1990, the Asheville Citizen announced that Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College trustees had named K. Ray Bailey the college's third president.

Mr. Bailey, the college's vice president for administrative services since 1983 and an employee at the school since 1966, was chosen to succeed Harvey Haynes when Mr. Haynes retired at the end of June in 1990.

"Bailey won out over 97 applicants and six other finalists in a search that began last August." [David Nivens, "A-B Tech Gets New President," [Asheville Citizen, March 22, 1990]

"This was a very difficult and very important decision," said Dave L. Robinson, who directed the search committee.

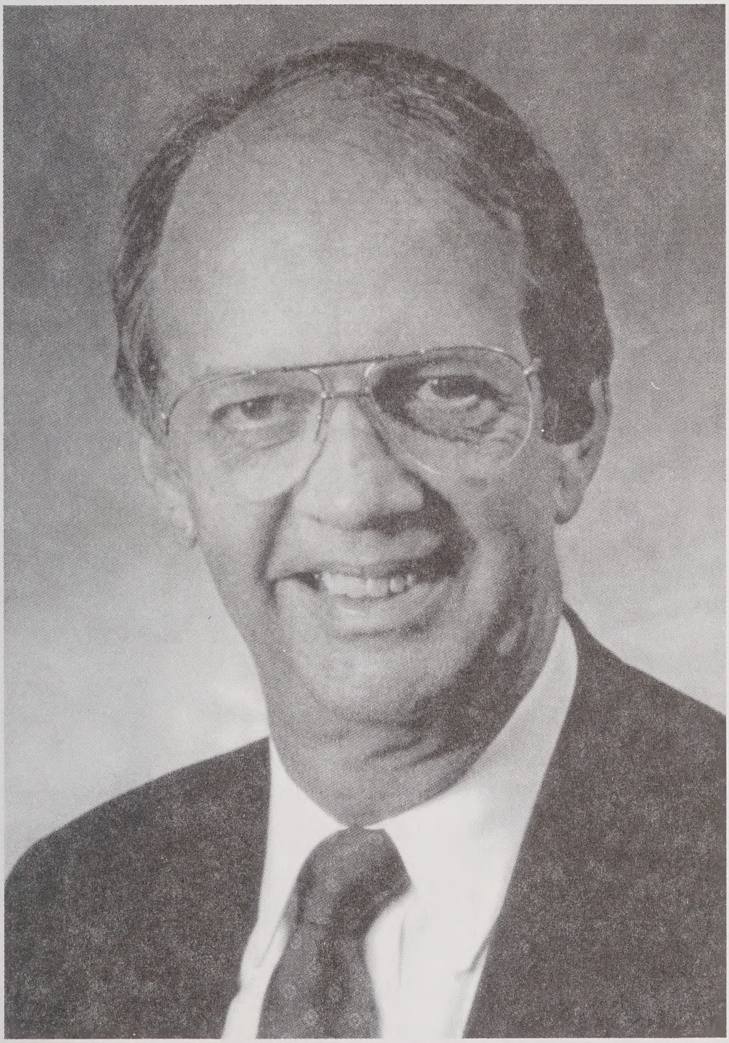
"We know he enjoys the respect of local business and industrial leaders," said Virginia C. Taylor, chairperson of the board of trustees, "and his peers throughout the state."

Mr. Bailey was graduated with a bachelor's degree from Middle Tennessee State University and a master's in education from Western Carolina University.

On Monday, May 26, 1990, Mr. Bailey was quoted by reporter David Nivens: "I am very excited about the opportunity and feel very good I was chosen. You never know how the processes will end up. I gave it my best." [Asheville Citizen] The State Board of Community Colleges had to approve the appointment, which it did.

Mr. Bailey's plans included putting in new programs and updating others and giving the faculty and staff "the tools to do the job." [Asheville Citizen, March 26, 1990]

Ray Bailey's inauguration as the president was held in the Laurel Auditorium on A-B Tech's campus on July 1, 1990.



K. Ray Bailey, President of A-B Tech 1990 - present

On July 10, 1990, Asheville Citizen's staff writer, Tula Andonaras, highlighted Mr. Bailey's inauguration address when he promised "renewed commitment to quality education" and looked upon his new position as a challenge.

"I am reminded of a story by George Vaughan, a noted community college education," Bailey said. "He says that being a community college president is like dancing with a bear -- you don't quit or retire until the bear gets tired of dancing and lets you go.

"Many of us at this college accused Harvey Haynes of taking the bear into a momentary pause and then quickly escaping. I can assure you that the bear is dancing again. I have been faced with the prospects of a state budget that could have a profound negative impact on the programs this college offers in Buncombe and Madison Counties.

"Additionally, we are expecting a tuition increase that, without financial aid, could possibly prevent many potential students from enrolling in our college. Yes, the bear is dancing to a very fast tune."

Bailey said there would always be a need to expand facilities at A-B Tech but nothing is planned to equal the magnitude of construction that has been undertaken in the past two years.

"In 30 years, A-B Tech has gone from a trade school to a fully accredited, comprehensive community college that has grown from three programs to 33, two buildings to 21, and 20 acres to 144. But most importantly, we have served thousands of individuals in curriculum and continuing education offerings. We have graduated over 9,000 diploma and degree students, provided the necessary tools for employment, re-employment or promotion.

"We have produced nurses, engineering technicians, bankers, chefs, carpenters, dental hygienists, x-ray technicians, law enforcement personnel, emergency medical personnel, accountants, welders, computer programmers, automotive mechanics, medical laboratory technicians, secretaries, heating and air-conditioning mechanics, draftsmen, machinists, surveyors, and the opportunity for many to transfer to a four-year institution to pursue an advanced degree.

"We have taught adults to read and have provided others with basic education, offered dropouts the ability to earn a high school diploma of the GED and have offered a compensatory education program for mentally handicapped adults in order that they can experience a better life."

Mr. Bailey's immediate plans in 1990 were to complete the facilities which had been planned with the bond referendum money, such as to compete the addition to the Learning Resource Center, build a student center and a career center. He also planned to reactivate the college foundation to procure private funding for essential needs of the college not met by government sources.

K. Ray Bailey Enjoying Inauguration. [Asheville Citizen, July 3, 1990]

Mr. Bailey, whose titles included business manager, vice president of fiscal services, and vice president of administrative services before becoming president of A-B Tech, feels it is unusual for a president of a college to be named from the financial side of the staff rather than from the academic side. He never had any idea of being president. "All I did was focus on doing a good job and moved up the ladder administratively." He credits part of it to luck in being in the right place at the right time.

Staff members did not credit Mr. Bailey's success with luck. Jane Smith and Jessie Goforth felt he has been a fiscal expert, not just recognized at A-B Tech but in the state's community college system. Many people on the campus voiced their opinions that he was really a "good" person who works hard to help the school. Faculty members expressed that he was "comfortable" to be around. When some on the campus felt there was a chance an "outsider" could be chosen as president, they contacted local community leaders to voice their support for Mr. Bailey.

Perhaps Dave Robinson, who was on the board of trustees that appointed Mr. Bailey, sums up the reasons for him as their choice: "Personable, good financial background, years of growing with and understanding the school's purpose, knowledge of the students and faculty."

"Piloted by visionary leaders," stated Sara Morris, former director of development, "the college has grown into an economic resource of unparalleled proportion." [Interviews, Fall 1995]

Other current administrators, not included later in specific offices and divisions, are Olin R. Wood, vice president of instructional services; Charles P. Branch, vice president of administrative services; Elizabeth R. Heaton, who had been an administrator in HRD, became personnel officer in 1992.

Staff

Dennis King is the vice-president of student services. Mary Louise Carpenter is the current director of counseling in student services. She feels that many changes have occurred in the student services office in the five years from 1989 through 1994. Through 1988, there were only two classifications for students, curriculum and unclassified. Before 1989, hundreds of students did not enter because they failed to meet the test score requirements to enter a curriculum. The term "provisional" student was created in 1989. This was more than just a term to allow students to enter and then "flounder" if they could not do the work. Plans had been made. President Haynes was committed to set minimum standards in reading, English, and mathematics because of the new emphasis on critical and analytical skills needed by business and industry. Plus, Mary Carpenter and Debbie Harmon had found a computerized placement testing program which was effective in determining these skills plus its being feasible to use in the counseling and admission procedure.

If, after testing, students could not be accepted into the curriculums of their choice, they were advised what help they needed in order to qualify. Most provisional students are advised to take the courses they need in the guided studies program. The sequences of the courses needed are outlined for the students. A few students who cannot read at eighth-grade level need adult basic education before entering the guided studies classes. Currently, so many students do go through one or more guided studies courses that this is the largest department on the campus. However, these students then continue and can become successful in their chosen fields. [Interview, Mary L. Carpenter, Fall 1995] This may be the "open door" policy of community colleges at their best. A-B Tech's success with its new placement policies has been studied by other community colleges.

A-B Tech was one of the first community colleges to organize a centralized program to assist students with special needs. Deborah Harmon, counselor, is the coordinator for these students. A-B Tech's student services received the Southeastern Regional Outstanding Program award from the council of Student Development for "Celebrate Ability," designed to recognize the capabilities of disabled workers.

Currently, in the office of student services, in addition to Dennis King, Mary Louise Carpenter, and Deborah Harmon, are Paulette Brownlee, recruiter/job placement counselor; E. Arleen Bryan, counselor; Connie Buckner, director of admissions; Matthew Ledford, registrar; John G. Draughon, counselor/veterans advisor; Deborah Harmon, counselor; Stephen Maag, director of student activities; Faye Muse, coordinator of academic advising; secretaries Diane Hall, Patricia Lail, Mona Lancaster, Catherine Noblitt, Vera Williams, Martha Woodruff. Martha and Catherine have served the school for many years.

In the Learning Resource Center, automation came of age on January 4, 1988, when the card catalog was closed and when computers became the way to check for available sections. Big changes also had to be made in the Learning Resource Center when the college transfer program was introduced in the fall of 1989. Books, journals, and other research materials that were not previously needed for the earlier programs had to be obtained as quickly as possible. Funds had a hard time keeping up with needs.

Students for the fall quarter of 1992 numbered 3,500. Many of these were enrolled in the new college transfer program. More materials were needed.

The LRC staff and department chairpersons and faculty members worked as hard as possible to accommodate these students. Circulation of materials grew from 1983 with 16,539 to 1993 with 27,390.

The Learning Resource Center needed to expand to house the growing selections of research materials. In 1993, if a local bond referendum was passed, it included $2.5 million for this expansion. The bond passed and the new expansion was opened in the fall of 1995. The current LRC has over 60,000 feet of space.

Shirley McLaughlin is still the director of the learning resource center. Peggy Kyle, who was coordinator of library services, retired in 1991 after sixteen years of service. Martha McLean was hired in 1992 after Peggy's retirement. Lee Schleining, who was hired as audio-visual technician in 1988, later became coordinator of audio-visual services. Currently, Linda M. Davis is a library technical assistant; Brenda Spillman and Rebecca Davis are library clerks; Deborah Lindstrom is in library acquisitions.

Other staff members at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College are Mary Alice Church-Steurer, CPA, director of business services; Mark Pulliam held this position in 1990; Don R. Sims, director of plant operations since 1991; Glenn T. Anderson, director of financial aid; David C. McKinney, director of administrative computer systems, hired in 1986.

Timothy Stafford is coordinator of operations services, and Mark Griffin is coordinator of custodial services.

Robin S. Grooms, Ramona Stevens, and Margaret Shope are accounting clerks. (Margaret has been a valuable employee for many years.) Carolyn Hadaway, who used to do equipment inventory, is purchasing agent. Kathy M. Rhodes is in accounts payable, and Angela C. Merrell is accountant. David B. White is a research assistant; Rebecca R. Watkins is coordinator of equipment and facilities inventory, a position she has held since 1990; Mona Cornwell is the desktop publishing specialist; Linda Mack is the duplicating/mail clerk; Adrienne Oliver is a computer center specialist.

Maretta Kuykendall is the bookstore manager with Donna Sampson Taylor as the bookstore clerk.

Secretaries include Anne J. Plant, Tamala Stoud, Pamela Baker, Judy Borum, Kim Caraway, Sherry Cordell, Lynne Gabai, Joan Gilmore, Jo Ann Gipe, Lynn Gordan, Glenna Gunter, Kathryn Lemieux, Frances McDonald, Gaylen Saunders, Lee Sokol, Eileen Williams, Glenda Wolfe, Susan H. Wyatt, Nina Sloan, Donna Turner, Phyllis C. Wilson, Merion E. Presha.

Juanita Sluder and Emma K. Smith, long-time employees, retired during these years. In March of 1995, Kathryn Lemieux was installed as president-elect at the 44th State Conference of the North Carolina Association of Educational Office Professionals.

Curriculum Programs and Faculty

Big changes took place affecting programs at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College from 1988 through 1995. One of these changes was the restructuring of the curriculum divisions. The second change, the college transfer program, caused many new faculty to be hired, changes in the Library Resource Center, students services, and, particularly, changes in the general education division.

"Since 1989, attention has been focused upon effectiveness of the institute. The North Carolina Board of Community Colleges requested that annually institutions submit an institute effectiveness plan based upon achieving educational outcomes. In addition, this board requested that the colleges review all academic programs every five years. A-B Tech completed reviews of its first twelve programs in December of 1993." [Sara Morris, former director of development] Six academic programs and three nonacademic units were reviewed by 1995.

The programs had to be studied to see if some needed to be "dropped" or "updated" to keep up with new trends in businesses and industries and interests of students. Changes had to made to ensure the success of A-B Tech.

Currently, forty-one college programs are offered with many of the same ones offered at night on the campus plus additional courses offered only at night.

Changes started being made in 1990 in the structuring of the divisions of curriculum programs. From 1969 until 1990, there were six divisions for the curriculum programs: allied health, business, engineering technology, general education, hospitality education, and vocational-industrial.

In 1990, the business education division and the hospitality division joined to become the business and hospitality division. These five divisions had as directors David Wolfe in allied health, Richard White in business and hospitality, Richard Croom in engineering technology, Thomas Gaffigan in general education, and Stans Sluder in vocational-industrial.

Then, in 1993, there were four. Deans were appointed.

Allied Health and Public Service Education Division

In the allied health and public service education division, Jill Gehrig, who had been hired in 1992 as an instructor in the allied dental program, became the dean. This division had been broadened to include the law enforcement technology and the basic law enforcement technology that since its becoming the early criminal justice program had been in the general education division. The same degrees are offered, the associate arts degree for the two-year law enforcement technology and a certificate for the basic.

Also, three new programs were offered in the allied health and public service education division in 1993. A one-quarter phlebotomy certificate program was developed. Also, a program for an associate degree in early childhood was developed and a program for an associate degree in social services.

By September of 1992, the program to train skilled child care workers was being studied. An A-B Tech survey showed that the number of people in the field had doubled since 1987. Sara Morris stated that there was a demand for good child care workers and that people were demanding better trained workers. The program was scheduled to start in the fall of 1993 with 30 students. [Asheville Citizen-Times, September 29, 1992]

The title of the program became early childhood education and started in the fall of 1993. Cathy Pollack was hired to be the chairperson of this department. She stated that the lack of skills is the reason that there was such a large turnover for centers in child care. Ms. Pollack said it was estimated that 400 new and replacement jobs in the child care field in Western North Carolina would open in the next few years. Her goal was to train students so that they would know what to do with children, such as choosing activities that are developmentally appropriate and knowing what behaviors to expect from children at different age levels. [Asheville Citizen, August 4, 1993]

Classes are offered in areas such as orientation to early childhood education, child development, health safety and nutrition in early childhood, creative activities in early childhood, program administration, CPR and first aid safety.

Robert Foerster, principal of Emmanuel Lutheran School in West Asheville felt that this program was needed. He stated that North Carolina had some of the lowest qualifications for child care workers, basically being 18 years old and literate. He wanted to see trained workers.

In addition to the associate degree in early childhood education, there is a shorter length certificate program taught.

The social service associate degree was introduced in 1995. This program trains paraprofessionals for direct service delivery work in the social service areas, including family and child assistance, rehabilitation, health and medical services, youth services, mental health, etc. These major courses are taught by qualified adjunct faculty members. Jackie Jones-Nichlas became the first department chairperson.

Instructors who have been hired in the nursing program during these years include Sharon E. Medcalfe in 1988, Edith B. Pritchett in 1989, Sherry McCulley-Hall in 1990, Alesia Glasgow in 1993, and Ellen S. Smet in 1994.

Business and Hospitality Division

Joseph W. Franklin became the dean of the business and hospitality division. Joe was first hired in the fall of 1980 and became the chairperson of electronic data processing (later business computer programming) in January 1981.

The three departments in this division include business, computer technology, and hospitality/culinary, which are all service areas for businesses and industries. The chairpersons of these in 1993 were James A. Hagan, business administration (further divisions to program coordinators in business administration by 1994); Carol Y. Mull, computer technologies; and Sheila Tillman, hospitality education, hired in 1990.

Sheila Tillman was named the winner of the 1995 Excellence in Teaching Award in November, during a program to honor outstanding employees of the North Carolina Community College System. Tillman was chosen from 48 nominees representing colleges from across the state. Her selection followed interviews by members of the Community College System staff and a committee of the State Board of Community Colleges. Tillman graduated with a degree in home economics education from the University of Rhode Island in 1970. She earned a degree in culinary technology from A-B Tech in 1988, and a master's of education with a concentration in home economics from Western Carolina University.

Ray Bailey, President, said, "Sheila certainly exemplifies all the qualities of an excellent teacher. I can think of no one more deserving of this award than she is. We are especially proud of the fact that she is one of our own graduates who could have pursued her career in any number of places, but chose to return to us to teach." [Asheville Citizen-Times, November 17, 1995]

In October of 1994, at the request of President Bailey, a sixteen-member council, chaired by Sheila Tillman began having quality initiative meeting to discuss and determine how total quality management principles would be learned and incorporated by all college employees.

Other instructors who have been hired in this division, from 1987 through 1995, include John H. Humphrey, Jr., in 1987, instructor in business computer programming; Marilyn K. Schmid, in 1989, instructor in office education; Larry N. Garrett, in 1992, instructor in business computer programming; Kathy Lytle, Glenn A. Davis, and Rhonda West, all in 1993, in business computer programming. (Rhonda was hired in 1973 as a secretary and served later as an accountant.) Reza Setayesh and D. Laurie Pate were both hired in hospitality education in 1994. Kathy Toler, marketing and retailing instructor at A-B Tech since 1983, was named the 1993 N. C. Business Instructor of the Year by the North Carolina Community College Association of Business Chairmen and Department Heads.

Changes in the business administration included operations management technology program took over from the previous industrial management program. Banking and finance was reabsorbed into the business administration program. Offered at night in the business program are courses for real estate technology specialty and real estate appraiser.

Joe Franklin, dean of business and hospitality division, feels that technology changes will be made and that a campus wide design or blue print is needed to integrate systems in computer technologies. He has a fear that with the community college system the individual campuses will have a hard time retaining their autonomy with more state-wide course descriptions and curriculums. All schools are to convert to the semester system by the fall of 1997. Joe also feels that perhaps one of the greatest challenges at A-B Tech is hiring as dedicated faculty members as he observed when first coming to the school in 1980. The most enjoyable part of his 15 years at A-B Tech has been seeing students successfully placed in businesses and industries. The students make all the efforts worthwhile. [Interview, Fall 1995]

Engineering Technology and Vocational and Industrial Education

The divisions of engineering technology and vocational and industrial education were merged in 1993 into engineering and applied technology with Robert Anderson as dean.

Air conditioning, heating, and refrigeration is still offered in both day and evening programs as are civil engineering technology, drafting and design technology, electronics engineering technology, machinist, mechanical engineering technology, residential carpentry, surveying technology, tool/die/mold making, and welding. The chemical technology program was discontinued. In June of 1994, the electronics engineering technology program was named a McGraw-Hill Center for "Excellence in Education."

Diesel vehicle maintenance and automotive service technician are offered only during the day. Only offered in night programs are electronics servicing, automotive mechanics, industrial electrical/electronics technology, machinist/advanced diploma, tool design technology.

Instructors hired in this division from 1988 through 1995 included in 1988, Adeeb L. Fakhoury, instructor in mechanical engineering; Donald G. Young, chemical technology chairperson. (The chemistry department was organized with the beginning of the chemical technology program. From 1970, chemistry courses started being taught to the nursing students then dental hygiene and medical laboratory, then engineering by 1972. This position was moved to the general education division with the beginning of the college transfer program.)

In 1990, Don Lovelace became chairperson of electronics engineering technology. In 1992, Frank Miceli and Mark Wright were hired in electronics. In 1993, Richard Wolfe was hired as an instructor in automotive and David W. Walker in diesel vehicle maintenance.

In June of 1990, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College and Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, N. C., "formed a partnership to bring three bachelor's degree programs in engineering technology to Asheville." Starting in the fall of 1990, A-B Tech's graduates with associate degrees could apply to WCU for the bachelor's program. WCU would provide faculty, and A-B Tech would provide the facilities. This gave students a chance to work toward a four-year degree without having to drive to Cullowhee. WCU Chancellor Myron Coutler said he expected the program to attract some 120 students in a few years. "We think this is the first such program in the state and perhaps the Southeast. This partnership also offers a considerable savings to taxpayers," said Coulter. Only a final "capstone" program would need to be taken on the WCU campus. President Haynes at A-B Tech felt that the addition of this upper level training program would greatly enhance Asheville's ability to attract and retain industries that would provide quality jobs for the community. [Asheville Citizen, June 28, 1990]

Another program redeveloped in the engineering division at A-B Tech offers three courses in auto mechanics. Automotive service technician is a course that is designed for two years and one quarter which includes a four-quarter internship program where students are placed out into the field in area dealerships and independent garages. Graduates receive an associate degree in applied science. The diploma program in auto mechanics takes two years for night students to complete and provides training in basic knowledge and skills needed to inspect, diagnose, repair and adjust automobile engines. The third course, called the certificate program, is held for short periods and is general maintenance offered to the general public a few times per week.

"I get calls every day from local dealers and independent garages seeking qualified people to work for them," said Bill Haney, chairperson of the automotive/diesel program at A-B Tech. "Qualified is the key word. The automotive technician field has become very specialized. Today, technicians have to be prepared through advanced education, and that includes an extensive background in electronics." According to a report issued by the U. S. Department of labor, more than 60,000 jobs are currently open in the United States for automotive service technicians. [Tula Andonaras, Asheville Citizen-Times, October, 1993]

Another program which would mainly benefit the engineering and applied technology division is one that has been studied for quite some time. By the fall of 1991, most of the six high schools in Buncombe County school system started offering the "hands on" program designed to upgrade technology education. With Tech Prep, high school vocational students could get community college credit for courses ranging from electronics to English. Students taking a community college associate degree can also apply those credits to a four-year bachelor's degree. [Asheville Citizen-Times, August 6, 1991] Much cooperative work had to be done between the high schools and community college to ensure that this would mean an better overall education for the students.

Tech Prep is a cooperative program between secondary schools and community colleges that guides high school students who are interested into courses that provide a technological and academic foundation for higher education or for work. This program was designed to help high school students who were not on the "track" for college prep courses, the ones that were considered as general education students.

In August of 1993, a consortium of Asheville City Schools, Buncombe and Madison county schools and Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College received a $150,000 one-year grant from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction to implement the Tech Prep. These funds would allow A-B Tech and the local high schools to align their curriculum materials as appropriate. [Asheville Citizen-Times, August 10, 1993] Approved courses in the high school can now be transferred to community colleges.

President Ray Bailey felt, as A-B Tech grew, there was a need for reorganization with deans over the four divisions. These deans could initiate changes in their divisions, create programs, form advisory groups, work closely with department chairpersons and faculty members to see the needs for their divisions. Joe Franklin, dean of the business and hospitality division, said it offered opportunities and challenges for the deans to be more responsible for the success of the division's programs. The deans now have more autonomy with how their budgets are spent and feel they are the ones who need to find out what training businesses want and need for students so that the programs could be implement accordingly. [Interviews, Fall 1995]

Division of Arts and Sciences

The general education division became the division of arts and sciences. Thomas Gaffigan, who had been hired as a mathematics instructor in 1965 and became the first, and only, division director of general education, was appointed as dean of the new division of arts and sciences. The name change came about because of the college transfer program in the fall of 1989.

"Asheville's new community college is attempting to live up to its name. Officials at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College have begun a study to see if high school graduates would use a college program next year [fall 1989] to help them toward a four-year degree." [David Nivens, "A-B Tech Studies College Transfer Program," Asheville Citizen, March 22, 1988]

On A-B Tech's campus in the spring of 1988, some instructors worst fears were realized when administrators started studying to see if a college transfer program would be feasible. These people had a fear that the vocational and technical programs which many had worked so hard to develop would be lost. To other instructors, it did not seem like a big change since students had been coming to A-B Tech for years and transferring their courses to four-year colleges. Some students when trying to enroll in the four-year colleges were told to go to A-B Tech and do well then reapply for admission.

Even though the "statewide community college system estimates that 55 percent of all college freshman take community college transfer credits to campus with them, state law limits the money a community college an spend on transfer students to 15 percent of its annual budget." [Asheville Citizen, March 22, 1988] However, a graduating program with students receiving an associate degree would be different.

The feasibility study included surveys to high school junior and seniors, parents, guidance counselors, industry and community leaders to see if a program were needed. Sara Morris, director of development at that time, stated that there was a need, but the feasibility study was done to see if the demand would be big enough.

This could be an opportunity for young high school students to "change their minds" about a college education. For example, quite often, young students entering high school decide they do not want to go to college and do not take, particularly, the mathematics and science courses needed if they change their plans. A-B Tech's new college transfer program could give these students the opportunity they need. They would be tested and instead of being turned away, they would be told the courses needed, perhaps in guided studies until they were ready to pursue the college transfer program.

Another type of student this could serve would be someone who had dropped out of high school, come years later to A-B Tech to obtain a GED, had been encouraged to go into a curriculum program at the school. The student gains confidence as he or she sees that college work can be mastered. After getting a two-year degree in accounting, why not go on for a four-year degree. Success has a way of making dreams bigger for some, particularly if unreal dreams have already come true. Students who want to enter the college transfer program and do not have the required credits, such as Algebra II, geometry, physics or chemistry may enter as "provisional" students and take the courses through guided studies. (These courses offer no college credit.)

Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College's board of trustees approved the college transfer program on August 26, 1988, after studying the 80-page feasibility report and its conclusions. This report illustrated that 62 percent of high school juniors and seniors surveyed would be interested in the transfer program. The State Department of Community Colleges showed in a survey done in 1987 that the addition of a college transfer program by a local community college had an overall beneficial effect on all public and private enrollment in the area. It tended to increase college attendance in general.

Talmadge Penland, chairperson of A-B Tech's board stated to reporter David Nivens [Asheville Citizen-Times, August 27, 1988], "This was something that needed to be done. This will provide an education to some students who may not have taken one." Dave Robinson, board member in 1988, said that some on the board were reluctant about this change but that it was realized to be an opportunity for students who hadn't had one before. "With the increasing need for employees to acquire additional education beyond high school, coupled with more families headed by a single parent and family incomes not keeping pace with increased tuition costs, the addition of transfer programs will give residents of Buncombe and Madison counties a wider choice of programs and access to a fully comprehensive technical community college," said President Haynes. [Asheville Citizen, March 22, 1988]

On October 13, 1988, the State Board of Community Colleges approved the new college transfer program for Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. "When the school opens next September, the associate of science degree program will begin with basic transfer courses in biology, chemistry, English, humanities, social studies, math and physics, according to A-B Tech officials." [Asheville Citizen, October 14, 1988]

All of these courses except biology and chemistry were already in the division of general education, so this division which used to be a handful of "related" instructors was the main division affected and the one from which the college transfer program would be offered.

"College officials have projected that their general approach to starting the program would put some 500 to 600 transfer students on the campus in the next three years at a cost of $1.4 million for new faculty and equipment." [October 14, 1988] The first program would be for an associate degree in science. Plans were made to add the associate degree in arts and fine arts.

Many changes had to be made quickly in the division of general education to meet this challenge. The school would have a transfer program, and the instructors would have to do it correctly. Students would be accepted. Faculty members' credentials to teach the college transfer courses were scrutinized.

Many instructors felt the pressure that if A-B Tech did not establish itself well with its first students in this program that this would hurt other students for many years by their not being accepted into the four-year colleges they wanted. A-B Tech's program had to earn "respect."

The English department, for example, had taught no literature courses nor "reaction to literature" papers, and some instructors had just about forgotten what "iambic pentameter" in poetry was. The college catalogs from the state universities were studied, books ordered, courses designed. In a few years, thirteen new English courses had been added, all with descriptive outlines made and approved by the state.

One student in the first graduating class came back by to visit her English instructor at A-B Tech. She said, when she transferred to the four-year school, she thought she was "on vacation" in her English courses; not only was she making better grades, but also she had to write only two papers. Perhaps the incentive for the instructors to "do it right" went back to the first hired instructor, Steve Creasman. The idea was if you did not prepare your students, you weren't doing your _______ job.

New full-time instructors had to be hired to handle the influx of students. In 1989, Marie Cochrane was hired for general education, Jeffrey H. Collins for history (A-B Tech's first history instructor), C. Lisa Johnson for English.

More instructors were hired in the next few years for general education. John P. Schmidt had been hired in 1988 as a physics instructor, but he left for Yugoslavia, and John Graham was hired in 1991. Thomas F. Dechant was hired in 1990 to teach biology and Matthew Fender for chemistry. (Biology and chemistry had been moved to the arts and science division.) In 1992, David Holcombe, who had been a long-time dependable and capable adjunct English instructor, was hired, along with Peter Carswell in humanities, Karma Crouch in mathematics, and David

H. Davis in biology, Teresa Kennedy in Spanish, William Hooper in physics. In 1993, Randee B. Goodstadt was hired in humanities and K. Eugene Norton in English to take the place of Joyce Parris who retired.

Psychology and sociology had been taught from the early years of A-B Tech; however, a wide variety of humanity courses had to be added for the college transfer program. The humanities department was organized in the spring of 1989 with Bill Collins' being appointed as chairperson. The humanities department includes the social sciences, political science, history, art, music, philosophy, geography, and anthropology. Most of these courses are taught by adjunct faculty members. The adjunct, or part time, instructors are indispensable to the success of the college transfer program. Currently, there are from twenty to twenty-five adjunct faculty members teaching English courses.

The physical education department was established in the fall of 1981 with Jim Rhea as its chairperson. (Jim was a long-time drafting instructor, hired in 1965.) Instructors other than Jim are all adjunct faculty members. Courses during the early years were mainly on an elective basis for all students except law enforcement technology. In 1989, with the college transfer program, health and wellness courses, first aid and CPR courses, and lifetime fitness were added. The name of the department changed in 1994 to health and physical education. The facilities consist of six outdoor tennis courts, an indoor basketball court, two outdoor volleyball courts, a track, a softball field, and a "work out" gym. Over twenty-three courses are offered.

The guided studies department is considered an integral part of the arts and science division. This department was first a component of the Library Resource Center with classes taught in it. In 1978, Bill Collins, who had been hired as an instructor in psychology and sociology in the division of general education, became the coordinator of this newly formed department. In 1984, guided studies was moved to the general education division with Bill Collins as the chairperson in this department until 1992 when M. Susan Paterson, who had been a dedicated adjunct faculty member for many years, became the chairperson.

The purpose of guided studies is to provide students and prospective students with special counseling, assessment, and tutoring in the basic subjects of mathematics, English, and reading. The major objective of the department is to help individuals experience success at levels which will lead to achievement in the school's curriculum programs.

Susan Paterson was one who always set high goals for her students and wanted them to achieve. Guided studies is currently one of the largest departments at A-B Tech because of better entrance testing and more students wanting to be prepared for the curriculum programs they attempt. Many adjunct faculty members teach in these courses in addition to the full time faculty members: Elizabeth F. Hester, hired 1994; Sharon Killian, hired 1992; Ellen H. Price, hired as a reading and English instructor in 1973.

Ellen Price, who also taught sociology and psychology, in June of 1988 was granted a Fulbright-Hays Group award and went with fifteen community college instructors and administrators to Egypt and Israel for forty days of intense study to learn more about the culture in these countries. [Asheville Citizen-Times, June 5, 1988] A-B Tech received a big honor by Mrs. Price's being selected to attend.

The division of arts and sciences currently offers two associate degree programs, the associate in arts and the associate in science. This division also offers a certificate program in general technology curriculum core, which is designed as a career mobility program for technical students to acquire the general education and related courses. After completion of this certificate curriculum, the student has job skills for occupations requiring communications skills and/or science and mathematics. The law enforcement degree technology program was transferred from the arts and science division to the allied health and public service education in 1993.

Tom Gaffigan, dean of arts and sciences, who has been at A-B Tech since February of 1965, never foresaw the growth of the school -- and probably never envisioned the growth of what used to be "related" faculty into a college transfer program. He felt that the strengths of the school caused its growth. He pointed out that the costs for students have been low; the flexibility of the programs have met community needs; the school has had and has dedicated instructors, both full time and adjunct, and administrators. Mr. Gaffigan has enjoyed being at the school and the people he has worked with. He sees the biggest challenge, again, as a lack of space in which to hold classes and says that mentioned "high rise" building is needed. [Interview, Fall 1995]

Continuing Education

From the years 1988 through 1995, the continuing education kept growing and developing more courses for business and industry and for community education services. Continuing education serves about 20,000 students per year. Max V. Hutchins is associate vice president of continuing and off-campus education.

Business and Industry

Don Lovelace is the current dean of business and industry services. Focused industrial training is designed to address the special needs of existing North Carolina industry to upgrade workers. In the 1993-94 year, 234 trainees were served in this field. Mary J. Ferell, hired in 1989, is the current coordinator of FIT.

The new and expanding industry programs are designed to provide customized training programs for prospective employees. In 1993-94, trainees in the program were 145.

Occupational programs provide training for individuals to prepare for new or different employment or to enable employees to meet certification requirements. The quality program provides training and technical assistance to total quality practices for businesses, industries, and agencies. Curtis H. Lane, Jr., has served as director of occupational education. Gregory F. Rutherford served from 1989 as director of the hospitality service.

The small business center provides consulting and advising services to present and potential business owners. Since 1989, Harry D. Ponder has been the director. In 1993-94, there were 745 seminar participants and 178 consultations.

Community Service Education

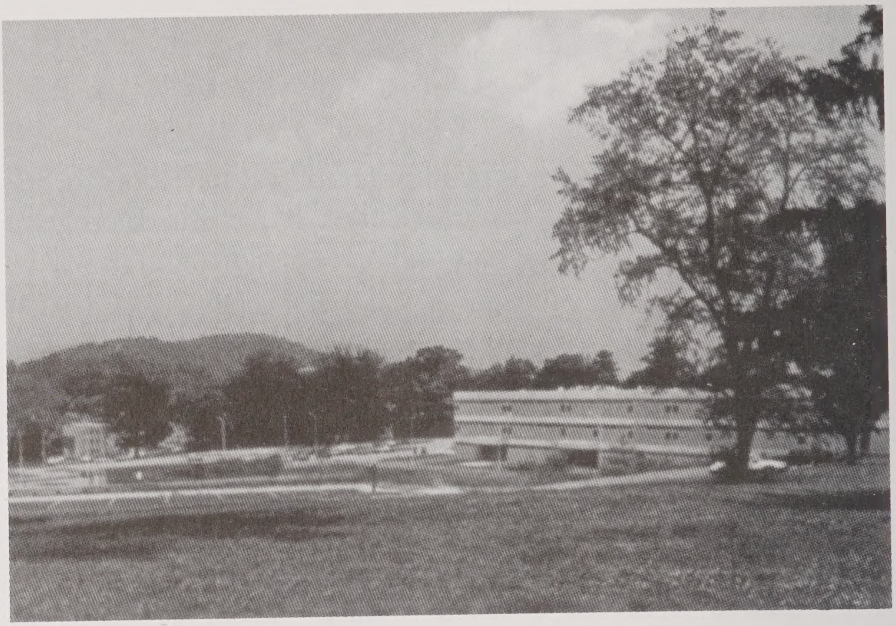
The director of the community service education, since 1989, has been Brinda Caldwell. Jean Clayton continues to be the director of the adult basic education. Since 1988, Mary Hay Gwynn has been the basic skills coordinator/HRD and became the director in 1992. The continuing education services include the basic skills and adult basic education programs, English as a second language, compensatory education program (a program for mentally challenged adults), community services programs (avocation, such as pottery, art, woodworking, etc.), and human resource development (HRD). The adult basic program in 1992-93 served 21,141 students, and in the 1993-94 period, 603 students were awarded GEDs. The compensatory education program had 757 students enrolled in 1992-93. The avocational courses served 1,978 students in 1992-93. The HRD program served 480 students in 1992-93. In November 1994, HRD job developer/assessment specialist Skye Myrick began the North Carolina Community College Leadership Program.

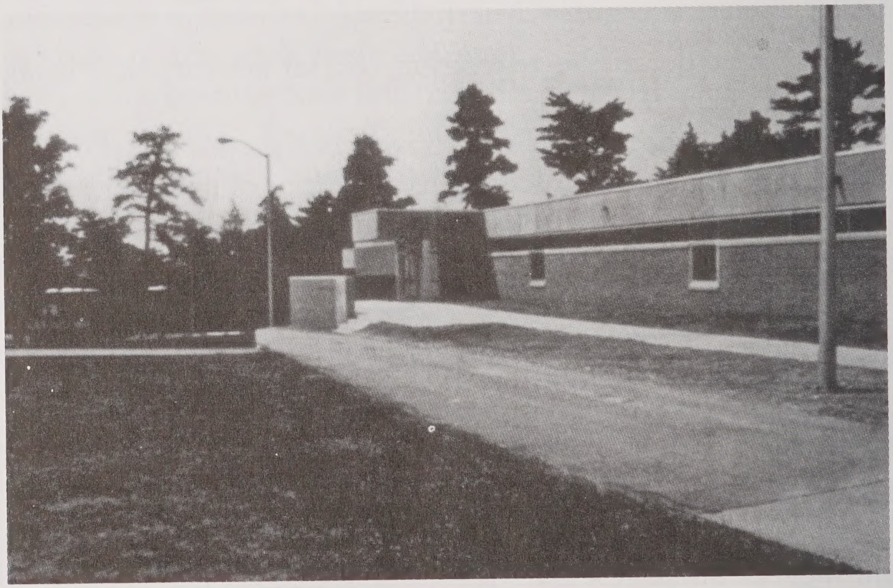
In 1988, a different type of program was developed in the community services field. "An internationally recognized program for training craftsmen in the restoration of age-old buildings will be offered for the first time in the United States this fall at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. The program, which is being brought to the college with the aid of the Asheville-based Biltmore Campbell Smith Restorations Company, will produce 14 craftsmen from its first year class. Those craftsmen will spend part of their supervised training restoring classic buildings in Western North Carolina, such as the Asheville City Hall." [Asheville Citizen-Times, May 7, 1988]

Harvey Haynes credited William Cecil, president of Biltmore Campbell Smith Restorations, with bringing the program to the college. Cecil's company, in addition to restoring the Biltmore House, had done work on buildings across the United States. "We can either bring in artists or train them here," Cecil said. "Our artists will take a second place to no one. That is what we are after."

These decorative restoration courses are currently being taught in the Ivy Building.

In December of 1994, plans were being made to use the six Buncombe County high schools to offer avocational courses and adult basic education at night under the sponsorship of A-B Tech. "The potential market for the night classes is huge," said Frank Yeager, then Buncombe County Schools superintendent. "The convenience of having to travel only a few miles and on-site day care could bring as many as 10,000 to 15,000 or more adults a year." [Asheville Citizen-Times, December 18, 1994] In the fall quarter of 1995, a variety of avocational courses plus adult basic education/GED classes were being taught at Erwin and Owen High Schools. More than ten other sites held the GED classes throughout Buncombe and Madison counties.





Elm and Laurel

Conclusion, 1988 through 1995

The years from 1988 through 1995 at Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College were ones of rapid change -- growth in buildings, students, programs, faculty and staff members. Many employees hired in the 1960s and early 1970s are still serving at the college and, although they have seen it, hardly can believe what has happened.

When he became president in July 1990, Ray Bailey said that there were normally four stages in the life cycle of an organization: birth, growth, maturity, and renewal or decline. He felt the maturity state had been achieved, so the challenge was to renew. In the fall of 1990, an additional 627 curriculum students arrived on campus, making the total enrollment for curriculum students 4,108. Currently, new classrooms, probably a "high rise" building and parking lots are needed. (As much as people hate to see grass dozed and asphalted, this is a "commuting college," and dormitories are still forbidden on community college campuses.) Mr. Bailey feels that curriculum student enrollment will "level off" to about 5,000 students by the year 2000.

Faculty members who have been on the campus through the years say that the least change they have seen are in their hardworking students. Celia Miles, who was employed in 1971 and currently department chairperson of English and foreign languages, felt she had found her "niche" when she arrived. She does not feel the students have changed in her years. They still vary in ages, are interesting, and have different ideas. They can still be approached on an adult-to-adult basis. Some instructors feel that fear of law suits has taken spontaneity away from the instructor-student relationship. They feel that well-intentioned laws have somewhat hampered the closeness that used to exist. In the "old days" when a student really achieved or was having hard times, personal or otherwise, instructors felt free to hug them or to put an arm around them. They cared about their students and were spontaneous in showing it, but now they are afraid to illustrate this care. One misinterpretation could cause a law suit. They still care very much for their students, but the desks stay between them.

Mr. Bailey believes that programs must continue to be evaluated and changed as needed. Job trends must be studied so that the students will receive the educations they need. As technology changes, the college must change. Some feel that programs to meet the needs of Western North Carolina may be hampered. They feel that the community colleges, statewide, have grown so rapidly that the North Carolina Community College System has a fear it is getting "out of control" and is trying to remedy the situation by more rules and more dreaded paperwork. The result they fear is that all community colleges will be "carbon copies" of each other without tending to the individual community's needs for its students.

The future is unknown, but Asheville-Buncombe Industrial Education Center/Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute/Asheville-Buncombe Technical College/Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College has had an interesting past with dedicated administrators, staff, faculty members, and students.

CONCLUSION

When the Industrial Educational Center first started, few people even knew about it, and most who were aware of its purpose did not take the venture seriously with two buildings sitting on Victoria Road with a few people mingling around -- doing something. Most people did not realize people were there who had big plans for this location. They wanted to serve students who needed more than what had been offered by the state's educational system in the past.

These students either did not have the resources or did not have the desire to attend a four-year college, but they wanted successful employment. A dedicated few administrators and instructors started working with these students. Both learned over the years that changes had to be made. Mr. Tom Simpson, the director, realized that the funds for this school were provisional. Without success, the whole program could be "dropped." Funds at this time were not committed. However, keeping the number of students and, thereby, programs, employees, buildings, implanted a dream that the school could succeed -- and the dream continued.

The "torch has passed" from many of the administrators, staff, and faculty who gave their best efforts for the students and for the success of a small industrial education center which they saw grow. All hope they made a difference in the lives of even a few students they came in contact with over the years. The students were the ones who were important to the ones who "came before" as they are to most who are still at A-B Tech Community College.

Three excellent schools have been on the Victoria Road campus or nearby to A-B Tech which were dedicated to helping the students of Western North Carolina, but these ran out of enough students. These are gone. Asheville Normal School lasted for fifty-seven years; St. Genevieve's lasted for eighty-six years;

Asheville Catholic High School lasted for thirty-seven years.

A-B Tech, at age thirty-seven, perhaps will survive if the ideals and the dedicated spirits of the past workers can be passed on. The basic simple goal is to help students to achieve. What better goal in life could anyone have than to enrich someone else's life.

APPENDIX: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

When the Asheville-Buncombe Education Industrial Center was first organized in 1959, the City of Asheville School Baord was the governing body. In September of 1963, the school was turned over to Buncombe County and had its own eight board of trustees' members; then, when the school became Asheville-Buncombe Technical Institute, four more members were appointed for a total of twelve members.

Board of Trustees' Members

	Appointed	Term Ended
L. F. Zerfoss	30 Sept. 1963	2 Aug. 1971, cp,1963-1965
J. Gerald Cowan	30 Sept. 1963	5 Nov. 1973, cp,1965-1967
J. Herbert Coman	30 Sept. 1963	30 June 1981, cp,1974-1976
	14 Sept. 1981	Present
Coke Candler	30 Sept. 1963	1 May 1972
Joseph Belton	30 Sept. 1963	20 Feb. 1971
W. W. Shope	30 Sept. 1963	22 Feb. 1973, cp,1967-1969
John M. Reynolds	30 Sept. 1963	4 Aug. 1969
John M. Barnes	30 Sept. 1963	5 Nov. 1973, cp,1969-1971
William Dillard	20 Jan. 1964	5 Feb. 1968
John Giezentanner	20 Jan. 1964	20 Nov. 1970
Paul Markwood	20 Jan. 1964	26 Jan. 1965
Ernest A. Mills	20 Jan. 1964	2 May 1983, cp,1973-1974
William M. Morgan	23 Apr. 1965	2 May 1977, cp,1971-1973
John Erichson	3 Feb. 1969	2 Aug. 1971
	4 Feb. 1974	7 May 1979, cp,1976-1978
	14 Sept. 1981	7 May 1990
Gordon Greenwood	3 Nov. 1969	Present
Richard Wood, Jr.	1 Nov. 1971	30 June 1987, cp,1984-1985
Herbert Hyde	1 Nov. 1971	2 May 1977
Howard Harrison	1 Nov. 1971	4 Aug. 1975
Joe Roberson	6 Nov. 1972	Present, cp,1980-1982; cp,1993-1995
Dave Robinson	7 May 1974	30 June 1995, cp,1978-1980
Edwin Higgins	4 Feb. 1974	30 June 1981
Jack Cox	4 Feb. 1974	3 Nov. 1980
Elizabeth Harper	17 Sept. 1975	Present
Bruce Mullin	1 July 1977	29 Apr. 1985
W. P. Griffin	7 Nov. 1977	30 June 1987, cp,1982-1984

	2 Nov. 1987	Present
Zeb Sheppard	1 July 1979	Present
Talmadge Penland	14 Sept. 1981	Present, cp, 1986-1989; cp,1995-Present
J. Ray Elinburg	25 July 1983	Present
Virginia Taylor	4 Nov. 1985	30 June 1993, cp,1989-1991
Dershie McDevitt	3 Aug. 1987	1 Mar. 1995
J. Owen Tilson	5 Oct. 1989	Present
Reese Steen	6 Nov. 1989	30 June 1993
Thomas F. Dabney	6 Aug. 1990	30 June 1994
Robert Edwards	1 July 1993	Present
William Hart	1 July 1993	Present
Harvey Haynes	1 July 1994	Present
Ray Spells	1 July 1995	Present
Kate Myers	1 July 1995	Present